

Department of Education
REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH
Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Request

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Appropriations Language	J-1
Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes.....	J-3
Amounts Available for Obligation	J-5
Obligations by Object Classification	J-6
Summary of Changes	J-7
Authorizing Legislation.....	J-10
Appropriations History.....	J-12
Significant Items in FY 2011 Appropriations Reports.....	J-13
Account Summary.....	J-14
Activities:	
Vocational rehabilitation State grants	J-17
Client assistance State grants	J-32
Supported employment State grants	J-37
Migrant and seasonal farmworkers.....	J-45
Projects with industry	J-49
Training	J-57
National activities to improve rehabilitation services	J-65
Demonstration and training programs	J-67
Program improvement.....	J-71
Evaluation	J-76
Independent living	J-81
Protection and advocacy of individual rights.....	J-92
Recreational programs	J-96
National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research	J-99
Access through cloud computing.....	J-112
Helen Keller National Center	J-114
Assistive technology.....	J-122
Workforce innovation fund.....	J-130
State Tables.....	J-134

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

For carrying out, to the extent not otherwise provided, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, and the Helen Keller National Center Act, \$3,541,111,000, of which \$30,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2013, shall be available to the Secretary for the Workforce Innovation Fund, as established by this Act:¹ Provided, That the Secretary of Education may allocate to States, in accordance with a formula determined by the Secretary, up to \$56,282,000 of the funds provided for the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program:² Provided further, That section 302(g)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act shall not apply to funds provided under section 302 of such Act:³ Provided further, That of the amount provided for Grants for Independent Living under Part B of Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act, the Secretary of Education shall reserve no more than 1.55 percent for training and technical assistance activities:⁴ Provided further, That of the amount provided for Grants for Independent Living under part B of title VII of the Rehabilitation Act, no State or Outlying Area shall receive less than the combined amount it received under parts B and C of title VII of such Act for fiscal year 2011, provided that the State or Outlying Area matches, in cash or in kind, the equivalent of one dollar for each nine dollars in Federal funds it received for fiscal year 2011 under part B of title VII of such Act:⁵ Provided further, That each State or Outlying Area shall reserve the lesser of \$300,000 or 5 percent of its allocation for Grants for Independent Living to support the operation of a Statewide Independent Living Council, as authorized under section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act:⁶ Provided further, That each State or Outlying Area shall award no less than 90 percent of its allocation to centers for independent living that meet the standards and assurances in section 725 of the Rehabilitation Act:⁷ Provided further, That such allocation of funds among centers for independent living shall be based on an approved State Plan for

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Independent Living that is developed in accordance with section 704 of the
Rehabilitation Act.⁸

NOTES

A regular 2011 appropriation for this account had not been enacted at the time the budget was prepared; therefore, this account is operating under a continuing resolution (P.L. 111-322, Dec. 22, 2010; 124 Stat 3518) that provides funding through March 4, 2011. The amounts included for fiscal year 2011 in this budget reflect the annualized levels provided by the continuing resolution.

Each language provision that is followed by a footnote reference is explained in the Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes document which follows the appropriation language.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p>¹ <u>...of which \$30,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2013, shall be available to the Secretary for the Workforce Innovation Fund, as established by this Act:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language earmarks \$30 million, to be used in combination with other funds in the Departments of Education and Labor, for a proposed interagency Workforce Innovation Fund to encourage innovation and support projects to identify and validate effective strategies for improving the delivery of services and outcomes for beneficiaries under programs authorized by the Workforce Investment Act. These funds would be available for obligation for 2 years.</p>
<p>² <u>Provided, That the Secretary of Education may allocate to States, in accordance with a formula determined by the Secretary, up to \$56,282,000 of the funds provided for the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language would allow the Secretary to allocate the funds made available from program consolidations in a manner that ensures that States do not receive less than they would have received from the formula distributions of program funds that are proposed for consolidation.</p>
<p>³ <u>Provided further, That section 302(q)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act shall not apply to funds provided under section 302 of such Act:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language overrides the requirement that 15 percent of the Training program must be spent for in-service training of agency personnel. These funds are being consolidated with the VR State grants program.</p>
<p>⁴ <u>Provided further, That of the amount provided for Grants for Independent Living under Part B of Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act, the Secretary of Education shall reserve no more than 1.55 percent for training and technical assistance activities:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language sets aside a maximum of 1.55 percent of funds from the proposed Grants for Independent Living program for the Department to use for training and technical assistance targeting the program's grant recipients and subgrant-recipients.</p>

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p>⁵ <u>Provided further, That of the amount provided for Grants for Independent Living under part B of title VII of the Rehabilitation Act, no State or Outlying Area shall receive less than the combined amount it received under parts B and C of title VII of such Act for fiscal year 2011, provided that the State or Outlying Area matches, in cash or in-kind, the equivalent of one dollar for each nine dollars in Federal funds it received for fiscal year 2011 under part B of title VII of such Act:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language, which sets a minimum amount that States can receive from Grants for Independent Living, would ensure that States do not receive less in fiscal year 2012 under the Grants for Independent Living program than they did in fiscal year 2011 under the combined allocations from Independent Living State Grants and the Centers for Independent Living programs.</p>
<p>⁶ <u>Provided further, That each State or Outlying Area shall reserve the lesser of \$300,000 or 5 percent of its allocation for Grants for Independent Living to support the operation of a Statewide Independent Living Council, as authorized under section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language requires each State to reserve the lesser of \$300,000 or 5 percent of their allocation under the Grants for Independent Living program for the State's Statewide Independent Living Council.</p>
<p>⁷ <u>Provided further, That each State or Outlying Area shall award no less than 90 percent of its allocation to centers for independent living that meet the standards and assurances in section 725 of the Rehabilitation Act:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language requires States to subgrant at least 90 percent of their Grants for Independent Living funds to qualified centers for independent living.</p>
<p>⁸ <u>Provided further, That such allocation of funds among centers for independent living shall be based on an approved State Plan for Independent Living that is developed in accordance with section 704 of the Rehabilitation Act.</u></p>	<p>This proposed language requires States to distribute subgrants to centers for independent living according to a published State Plan for Independent Living.</p>

NOTE

A regular 2011 appropriation for this account had not been enacted at the time the budget was prepared; therefore, this account is operating under a continuing resolution (P.L. 111-322, Dec. 22, 2010; 124 Stat 3518) that provides funding through March 4, 2011. The amounts included for fiscal year 2011 in this budget reflect the annualized levels provided by the continuing resolution.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Amounts Available for Obligation (\$000s)

	2010	2011 CR	2012
Discretionary appropriation:			
Appropriation	\$422,165	0	\$400,133
Annualized CR (PL 111-322)	0	\$422,165	0
Discretionary modification of a mandatory appropriation (no CPIU adjustment)	0	0	-37,016
Discretionary modification of a mandatory appropriation (for consolidation)	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>56,282</u>
Subtotal, discretionary appropriation	422,165	422,165	419,399
Mandatory appropriation	<u>3,084,696</u>	<u>3,084,696</u>	<u>3,121,712</u>
Subtotal, discretionary and mandatory appropriation	3,506,861	3,506,861	3,541,111
Recovery Act unobligated balance, start of year	89,202	0	0
Recovery Act recovery of prior year obligations	3,635	0	0
Unobligated balance expiring	-51	0	0
Subtotal, obligations	3,506,810	3,506,861	3,541,111
Subtotal, Recovery Act obligations	<u>92,837</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total, direct obligations	3,599,647	3,506,861	3,541,111

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Obligations by Object Classification (\$000s)

	2010	2011 CR	2012
Contractual services and supplies:			
Advisory and assistance services	\$8,171	\$8,104	\$8,464
Peer review	1,197	766	800
Peer review, Recovery Act	65	0	0
Purchases of goods and services	<u>326</u>	<u>326</u>	<u>326</u>
Subtotal.....	9,759	9,196	9,590
Grants, subsidies, and contributions	3,497,116	3,497,665	3,531,521
Grants, Recovery Act.....	<u>92,772</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal, grants.....	3,589,888	3,497,665	3,531,521
Subtotal, obligations.....	3,506,810	3,506,861	3,541,111
Subtotal, Recovery Act obligations.....	<u>92,837</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total obligations.....	3,599,647	3,506,861	3,541,111

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Summary of Changes (\$000s)

2011 CR	\$3,506,861
2012	<u>3,541,111</u>
Net change	+34,250

	<u>2011 CR base</u>	<u>Change from base</u>
Increases:		
<u>Program:</u>		
Increase in funding for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State grants is from programs proposed for consolidation.	\$3,047,247	+\$56,282
Proposed funding for a new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program to replace three programs (Demonstration and Training programs, Program Improvement, and Evaluation).	0	+8,000
Proposed funding for a new Independent Living grants program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate Independent Living State grants and Centers for Independent Living.	0	+103,716
Increased funding for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research to support ongoing programs of research and development and evaluations of programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act.	109,241	+1,244
Proposed funding for an Access through Cloud Computing initiative to improve Internet and technology access for individuals with disabilities.	0	+10,000
Proposed funding for a new Workforce Innovation Fund for improving services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.	0	<u>+30,000</u>
Subtotal, increases		+209,242

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Summary of Changes (\$000s)

	<u>2011 CR base</u>	<u>Change from base</u>
Decreases:		
<u>Program:</u>		
Eliminates funding for the Supported Employment State grants program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the VR State grants program.	\$29,181	-\$29,181
Eliminates funding for the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the VR State grants program.	2,239	-2,239
Eliminates funding for the Projects with Industry program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the VR State grants program.	19,197	-19,197
Net decrease in funding for the Training program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate In-Service Training with the VR State grants program and to consolidate Parent Information and Training and Braille Training, funded under the Demonstration and Training programs, with the Training program.	37,776	-4,515
Eliminates funding for the Demonstration and Training programs consistent with the Administration's proposal to replace this program with the new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program.	11,601	-11,601
Eliminates funding for the Program Improvement program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program.	852	-852

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Summary of Changes (\$000s)

	<u>2011 CR base</u>	<u>Change from base</u>
Decreases:		
<u>Program:</u>		
Eliminates funding for the Evaluation program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program.	\$1,217	-\$1,217
Eliminates funding for the Independent Living (IL) State grants program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the new IL grants program.	23,450	-23,450
Eliminates funding for the Centers for Independent Living (IL) program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the new IL grants program.	80,266	-80,266
Eliminates funding for Recreational programs, which are more appropriately financed by State and local agencies and the private sector.	2,474	-2,474
Subtotal, decreases		-174,992
Net change		+34,250

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Authorizing Legislation (\$000s)

	Activity	2011 Authorized	2011 CR	2012 Authorized	2012 Request
J-10	Vocational rehabilitation State grants:				
	Grants to States (RA-I A, B-110 and 111)	0 ^{1,2}	\$3,047,247	0 ^{1,3}	\$3,103,529
	Grants for Indians (RA-I-C)	--- ^{2,4}	37,449	--- ^{3,4}	37,449
	Client assistance State grants (RA-I-112)	0 ¹	12,288	0 ¹	12,288
	Supported employment State grants (RA-VI-B)	0 ⁵	29,181	0 ⁵	0
	Migrant and seasonal farmworkers (RA-III-304)	0 ⁵	2,239	0 ⁵	0
	Projects with industry (RA-VI-A)	0 ⁵	19,197	0 ⁵	0
	Training (RA-III-302(a)-(g)(2),(h)-(i)),303(c)-(d))	0 ¹	37,766	0 ¹	33,251
	National activities to improve rehabilitation services (RA-III-303)	0	0	0 ⁶	8,000
	Demonstration and training programs (RA-III-303(b))	0 ⁵	11,601	0 ⁵	0
	Program improvement (RA-12(a))	0 ⁵	852	0 ⁵	0
	Evaluation (RA-14)	0 ⁵	1,217	0 ⁵	0
	Independent living:				
	Independent living grants (RA-VII-1-B)	0	0	0 ⁶	103,716
	State grants (RA-VII-1-B)	0 ¹	23,450	0 ⁵	0
	Centers (RA-VII-1-C)	0 ¹	80,266	0 ⁵	0
	Services for older blind individuals (RA-VII-2)	0 ¹	34,151	0 ¹	34,151
	Protection and advocacy of individual rights (RA-V-509)	0 ¹	18,101	0 ¹	18,101
	Recreational programs (RA-III-305)	0 ⁵	2,474	0 ⁵	0
	National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation				
	Research (RA-II)	0 ¹	109,241	0 ¹	110,485
	Access through cloud computing (RA-II)	0	0	0 ⁶	10,000
	Helen Keller National Center for				
	Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNCA)	0 ¹	9,181	0 ¹	9,181
	Assistive technology: (ATA)				
	Assistive technology programs (ATA-4,5, and 6)	Indefinite ⁷	30,960	0 ^{7,8}	30,960

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Authorizing Legislation—continued (\$000s)

Activity	2011 Authorized	2011 CR	2012 Authorized	2012 Request
Workforce innovation fund (<i>proposed legislation</i>)	---	---	0 ⁶	\$30,000
<u>Unfunded authorizations:</u>				
Demonstration projects to increase client choice (<i>RA-III-303(a)</i>)	0 ⁵	0	0 ⁵	0
Total definite authorization	0		0	
Total appropriation (request not authorized)		\$3,506,861		3,541,111

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language.

² The authorizing legislation specifies that the amount to be appropriated for VR State grants for a fiscal year be at least at the level of the prior fiscal year increased by the 12-month percentage change from October to October in the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPIU). In FY 2011, this amount was \$3,084,696 thousand, the same as the FY 2010 appropriation, since the change in the CPIU published in November 2009 would have resulted in a lesser amount.

³ The authorizing legislation specifies that the amount to be appropriated for a fiscal year be at least the level of the prior fiscal year increased by the 12-month percentage change from October to October in the CPIU. In FY 2012, this amount is \$3,121,712 thousand.

⁴ The Rehabilitation Act requires that 1.0 percent to 1.5 percent of the appropriation for Vocational Rehabilitation State grants be set aside for Grants for Indians.

⁵ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The Administration is not proposing to authorize this program through appropriations language for FY 2012.

⁶ This new program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language.

⁷ Such sums as are necessary are authorized, however up to \$1,235 thousand may be used for section 6 National Activities, unless the amount available for section 4 AT State grants exceeds \$20,953,534, in which case up to \$1,900 thousand may be used for section 6.

⁸ The GEPA extension applies through September 30, 2011. The program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Appropriations History (\$000s)

	Budget Estimate to Congress	House Allowance	Senate Allowance	Appropriation
2003	\$3,001,840	\$2,956,676	\$2,959,838	\$2,953,633
Transfer	0	0	0	-587
Technical correction	0	0	0	+487
2004	3,002,913	2,999,165	3,004,360	3,011,270
2005	3,047,197	3,054,587	3,077,328	3,074,574
2006	3,059,298	3,128,638	3,133,638	3,125,544
2007	3,180,414	N/A ¹	N/A ¹	3,242,512
2008	3,184,263	3,279,743	3,286,942	3,276,768
2009	3,218,264	3,387,443 ²	3,379,109 ²	3,387,762
Recovery Act Supplemental (PL 111-5)	0	700,000	610,000	680,000
2010	3,500,735	3,504,305	3,507,322 ³	3,506,861
2011	3,565,326	3,501,766 ⁴	3,542,510 ⁵	3,506,861 ⁶
2012	3,541,111			

¹ This account operated under a full-year continuing resolution (P.L. 110-5). House and Senate Allowance amounts are shown as N/A (Not Available) because neither body passed a separate appropriations bill.

² The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2009 appropriation bill, which proceeded in the 110th Congress only through the House Subcommittee and the Senate Committee.

³ The level for the Senate allowance reflects Committee action only.

⁴ The level for the House allowance reflects the House-passed full-year continuing resolution.

⁵ The level level for the Senate allowance reflects Committee action only.

⁶ The level level for appropriation reflects the continuing resolution (P.L. 111-322) passed December 22, 2010.

Significant Items in FY 2011 Appropriations Reports

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

Senate: Report 111-243. The Committee believes the Interagency Committee on Disability Research, currently led by NIDRR, needs to more effectively carry out its mission, including coordinating research and assessing research gaps as well as meeting required reporting requirements in a timely manner. Therefore, the Committee urges the administration, through the Interagency Committee on Disability Research [ICDR], to facilitate the development and implementation of a comprehensive Government-wide long-term strategic plan for disability and rehabilitation research by the spring of 2011. The strategic plan should reflect the active involvement of disability senior policy advisors, program directors and other staff from NIDRR and the Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with stakeholders conducting disability and rehabilitation research. The plan should be submitted to the Committee by April 1, 2011. The Committee further requests that the annual report prepared by ICDR should include an accounting of the progress made in implementing the long-term strategic plan.

Response: Several years ago the Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) began a multi-year planning process with its members and stakeholders to develop a Government-wide long-term strategic plan, including identification of strategies to enhance the Federal disability and rehabilitation research infrastructure in support of a Government-wide plan. The draft ICDR plan provides for a Government-wide assessment to be conducted of Federal disability and rehabilitation research, including identification of research gaps, unnecessary duplication of research effort, joint research activities, and opportunities for collaboration. Findings will also inform recommendations for research coordination and collaboration. The draft plan, entitled *Government-Wide Long-Term Disability Research Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2011-2015* is currently under review; it is anticipated that the plan will be completed and released before June 2011.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FISCAL YEAR 2012 PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

(in thousands of dollars)		Category Code	2010 Appropriation	2011 CR Annualized	2012 President's Budget	2012 President's Budget Compared to 2011 CR	
Account, Program and Activity	Amount					Percent	
Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research							
1. Vocational rehabilitation State grants:							
(a) Grants to States (RA Title I-A, sections 110 and 111)	M	3,041,797	3,047,247	3,103,529	56,282	1.8%	
(b) Grants to Indians (RA Title I-C)	M	42,899	37,449	37,449	0	0.0%	
Subtotal							
Discretionary modification to CPIU adjustment	D	0	0	(37,016)	(37,016)	---	
Discretionary modification for consolidation	D	0	0	56,282	56,282	---	
Mandatory baseline	M	3,084,696	3,084,696	3,121,712	37,016	1.2%	
2. Client assistance State grants (RA section 112)							
3. Supported employment State grants (RA VI-B)	D	12,288	12,288	12,288	0	0.0%	
4. Migrant and seasonal farm workers (RA section 304)	D	29,181	29,181	0	(29,181)	-100.0%	
5. Projects with industry (RA VI-A)	D	2,239	2,239	0	(2,239)	-100.0%	
6. Training (RA section 302(a)-(g)(2),(h)-(i), 303(c)-(d))	D	19,197	19,197	0	(19,197)	-100.0%	
7. National activities to improve rehabilitation services (RA section 303)	D	37,766	37,766	33,251	(4,515)	-12.0%	
8. Demonstration and training programs (RA section 303)	D	0	0	8,000	8,000	---	
9. Program improvement (RA section 12(a))	D	11,601	11,601	0	(11,601)	-100.0%	
10. Evaluation (RA section 14)	D	852	852	0	(852)	-100.0%	
10. Evaluation (RA section 14)	D	1,217	1,217	0	(1,217)	-100.0%	
12. Independent living (RA VII):							
(a) Grants for independent living (Chapter 1, Part B)	D	0	0	103,716	103,716	---	
(b) State grants (Chapter1, Part B)	D	23,450	23,450	0	(23,450)	-100.0%	
(c) Centers (Chapter 1, Part C)	D	80,266	80,266	0	(80,266)	-100.0%	
(d) Services for older blind individuals (Chapter 2)	D	34,151	34,151	34,151	0	0.0%	
Subtotal							
13. Protection and advocacy of individual rights (RA section 509)							
14. Recreational programs (RA section 305)	D	18,101	18,101	18,101	0	0.0%	
15. National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (RA II)	D	2,474	2,474	0	(2,474)	-100.0%	
16. Access through cloud computing (RA II)	D	109,241	109,241	110,485	1,244	1.1%	
17. Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNCA)	D	0	0	10,000	10,000	---	
18. Assistive technology programs (ATA, sections 4, 5, and 6)	D	9,181	9,181	9,181	0	0.0%	
19. Workforce innovation fund (proposed legislation)	D	30,960	30,960	30,960	0	0.0%	
19. Workforce innovation fund (proposed legislation)	D	0	0	30,000	30,000	---	
Subtotal							
Total							
Discretionary	D	422,165	422,165	419,399	(2,766)	-0.7%	
Mandatory baseline	M	3,084,696	3,084,696	3,121,712	37,016	1.2%	

NOTES: -Category Codes are as follows: D = discretionary program; M = mandatory program.

-The FY 2011 level for appropriated funds is an annualized amount provided under the fourth Continuing Resolution (P.L. 111-322).

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Summary of Request

The Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research account supports formula grants to States for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services and a variety of smaller research, demonstration, and service programs, including the programs authorized under the Helen Keller National Center Act and the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (the AT Act). The purpose of the programs in this account is to develop and implement, through research, training, and direct services, comprehensive and coordinated programs of vocational rehabilitation and independent living services for individuals with disabilities.

For Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research, the Administration's 2012 request provides \$3.5 billion to support comprehensive and coordinated vocational rehabilitation and independent living services for individuals with disabilities through research, training, demonstration, technical assistance, evaluation, and direct service programs. The Administration's 2012 request includes proposals for consolidating several programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act) that would reduce duplication and would improve program management and the provision of rehabilitation and independent living services. The Budget includes proposals that would consolidate vocational rehabilitation programs, independent living programs, and programs that support activities to improve program performance and the delivery of services.

The \$3.1 billion request for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program reflects the Administration's proposal to consolidate the funds of the smaller VR-related programs under the Rehabilitation Act in order to reduce duplication of effort and administrative costs, streamline program administration at the Federal and local level, and improve accountability. A total of \$56.3 million would be made available to the VR State Grants program from the consolidation of employment-related programs. Proposed for consolidation are the Supported Employment State Grants, Projects with Industry, and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers programs, as well as funds currently provided to State VR agencies to support in-service training for agency personnel under section 302(g)(3) of the Training program.

The Budget provides \$103.7 million for a new Grants for Independent Living program that replaces the Independent Living State Grants and Centers for Independent Living programs and would provide formula grants to States to support the provision of independent living services through centers for independent living. Under the proposed consolidation, a State would receive an amount that is equal to its combined allocations under the Independent Living State Grants and Centers for Independent Living programs in fiscal year 2011.

The Administration is requesting \$30 million, to be used in combination with funds from other Department of Education and Labor programs, for a proposed interagency Workforce Innovation Fund to encourage innovation and support projects to identify and validate effective strategies for improving the delivery of services and outcomes for beneficiaries under programs authorized by the Workforce Investment Act.

A new \$10 million Access through Cloud Computing initiative would seek to improve Internet and technology access for individuals with disabilities through research and development activities to provide on-demand accommodations that are stored remotely. This new initiative would be administered by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. An increase of \$1.2 million is requested for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research to

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Summary of Request

support ongoing research and development activities and rigorous evaluations of programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act.

The request includes \$8 million for a new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program that would replace Demonstration and Training programs and consolidate the resources used to support technical assistance and projects designed to improve program performance and the delivery of vocational rehabilitation and independent living services under the Evaluation and Program Improvement programs.

The Administration requests \$33.3 million for the Training program in fiscal year 2012, a net reduction of \$4.5 million from the 2011 CR level. The requested level reflects two changes to the program: the consolidation of \$5.7 million for the In-Service Training program with the VR State grants program and consolidation of \$1.2 million for two small training activities (Braille Training and Parent Information and Training Centers) currently supported under the Demonstration and Training programs.

The budget request does not include funds for Recreational programs. While the Administration strongly supports helping individuals with disabilities become full and active members in society, this program has limited national impact. The Administration believes that support for recreational activities would be more appropriately financed by State and local agencies and the private sector.

All other programs in the Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research account would be maintained at the 2011 CR level. The Administration believes that this level will provide sufficient funds for the activities in these programs.

The Rehabilitation Act requires that 1 percent of the aggregate funds appropriated for programs authorized in Titles II, III, VI, and VII be used for minority outreach activities. In fiscal year 2012, this amount would total \$3.0 million, and to the extent possible, the requirement will be implemented by reserving 1 percent of the funds provided for each of the specified programs.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title I, Parts A, B (Sections 110 and 111), and C)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0^{1,2}

Budget Authority (\$000s):

	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
State grants	\$3,047,247	\$3,103,529	+\$56,282
Indian set-aside	<u>37,449</u>	<u>37,449</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	3,084,696 ³	3,140,978	+56,282

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language.

² The authorizing statute specifies that the amount to be appropriated for a fiscal year be at least the level of the prior fiscal year increased by the 12-month percentage change from October to October in the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPIU). In FY 2012 this amount is \$3,121,712 thousand. The authorizing statute also requires that not less than 1.0 percent and not more than 1.5 percent of the appropriation for each fiscal year for Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants be set aside for Grants for American Indians.

³ Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program supports VR services through formula grants to State VR agencies. These agencies provide a wide range of services designed to help persons with disabilities prepare for and engage in gainful employment to the extent of their capabilities. Individuals with a physical or mental impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment who can benefit in terms of an employment outcome and require VR services are eligible for assistance. The VR State Grants program is a required partner in the one-stop service delivery systems under section 121 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

Program services are tailored to the specific needs of the individual through an individualized plan for employment (IPE). An eligible individual, or as appropriate, the individual's representative, may develop all or part of the IPE with or without assistance from a qualified rehabilitation counselor, or with technical assistance from other outside resources. The IPE must be agreed to by the individual and approved and signed by a qualified rehabilitation counselor employed by the State VR agency. The program may provide a variety of services, such as vocational evaluation, counseling, mental and physical restoration, education, vocational training, job placement, rehabilitation technology, and supported employment services. Priority is given to serving individuals with the most significant disabilities.

This is a current-funded formula grant program that provides financial assistance to States to cover the cost of direct services and program administration. The authorizing legislation requires the program to be funded at least at the prior year level, and increased by the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers (CPIU) over the past year. States

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

may carry over unobligated Federal funds for an additional year, if a State has met all matching requirements for the fiscal year in which funds were appropriated.

An allotment formula that takes into account population and per capita income is used to distribute funds among the States. The fiscal year 2010 allotments were based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2008. The fiscal year 2011 State allotments are based on the July 1, 2009 estimates published in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 State distributions are based on the April 1, 2010 Census data released on December 21, 2010. Per capita income averages for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 were based on Bureau of Economic Analysis revised estimates for calendar years 2005, 2006, and 2007 as reported by the Department of Commerce on September 18, 2008. Per capita income averages for fiscal year 2012 are based on Bureau of Economic Analysis revised estimates for calendar years 2007, 2008, and 2009 as reported by the Department of Commerce on September 20, 2010.

Grant funds are administered by VR agencies designated by each State. There are currently a total of 80 State VR agencies. Thirty-two (32) States operate a “combined” agency serving all disability categories. Twenty-four (24) States operate a separate agency for individuals who are blind or visually impaired and a “general” agency for all other disability categories. The State matching requirement is 21.3 percent, except the State share is 50 percent for the cost of construction of a facility for community rehabilitation program purposes. States are required to maintain the level of State expenditures made under the State plan from non-Federal sources at least at the level spent during the fiscal year 2 years earlier. Each State is also required to reserve and use a portion of the Federal funds received under the VR State Grants program for innovation and expansion activities authorized in section 101(a)(18).

Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act requires the establishment of evaluation standards and performance indicators for the VR program that include outcome and related measures of program performance. Each State VR agency must report program performance data 60 days after the end of each fiscal year that is used to determine if it is in compliance with the evaluation standards and performance indicators. A State agency failing to meet the standards must develop a program improvement plan outlining specific actions to be taken to improve program performance. The Department provides technical assistance to those State agencies that perform below the established evaluation standards to assist them to improve their performance.

Title VIII of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) provided additional funds, \$540 million, for grants to States to carry out the VR Services program. These awards were in addition to the awards received under the regular FY 2009 appropriation for the VR State Grants program. Together, these awards constituted a State’s total FY 2009 allocation for the VR State Grants program. The Recovery Act funds were allocated to State VR agencies under the program’s allotment formula and provided to State VR agencies in two installments. States received 50 percent of their allotted funds in April 2009 and their remaining funds were awarded in September 2009. The Recovery Act funds for the VR State Grants program must be used to carry out the purposes and authorized activities consistent with the program’s statutory and regulatory requirements. The Recovery Act funds remain available for obligation by State VR agencies until September 30, 2011. State VR agencies are not required to match these funds.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

The Rehabilitation Act requires that not less than 1.0 percent or more than 1.5 percent of the funds appropriated for the VR State grants program be set aside for grants under the American Indian VR Services program (section 121 of the Act). Service grants for up to 60 months are awarded to Indian tribes on a competitive basis to help tribes develop the capacity to provide VR services to American Indians with disabilities living on or near reservations.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

(\$000s)

2007	\$2,837,160
2008	2,874,043
2009	2,974,635
Recovery Act.....	540,000
2010	3,084,696
2011 CR.....	3,084,696

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$3.141 billion to assist States and tribal governments to increase the participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce. The request for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program reflects the Administration's proposal to consolidate the funds of the smaller VR-related programs and eliminate their separate funding authorities under the Rehabilitation Act in order to reduce duplication of effort and administrative costs, streamline program administration at the Federal and local level, and improve efficiency accountability. An additional \$56.282 million would be made available to the VR State Grants program from the consolidation of employment-related programs. Programs proposed for consolidation include: Supported Employment State Grants (\$29.181 million), Projects with Industry (PWI) (\$19.197 million), and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers programs (\$2.239 million). In addition, funds currently provided to State VR agencies to support in-service training for agency personnel under section 302(g)(3) of the Training program (\$5.665 million) would be included in this consolidation. The request does not include the CPIU adjustment specified in the authorizing statute, which would increase the total by an additional \$37.016 million.

Under its proposal to consolidate a number of smaller programs into the VR State Grants program, the Administration intends for every State to receive at least the amount it would have received in FY 2012 under the formula grant programs being consolidated (i.e., VR State Grants, Supported Employment State Grants, and the formula allocation under the In-service Training program) if they were continued at the FY 2011 level. To implement this policy, the State's base amount under the VR formula (currently the State's 1978 award) would be increased by an amount that is equal to the amount the State would have received in FY 2012 under the Supported Employment State Grants allocation and its formula allocation under the In-service Training program, assuming level funding. In addition, funds made available as a result of the consolidation of the PWI and the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers programs would be distributed based on relative State population and added to the State's base amount.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

All of the direct service programs proposed for consolidation have the primary purpose of assisting individuals with disabilities to prepare for and obtain employment. Consolidating these programs will reduce administrative costs, paperwork, and other administrative burden, as well as improve efficiency, accountability, and the provision of services. The Administration believes that the benefits of the proposed consolidation outweigh the costs of any short term disruption that may be encountered as a result of this consolidation. All of the individuals receiving services through the employment-related programs proposed for elimination are eligible to receive VR services. In addition, most of these individuals are also currently receiving services through the VR program, including all of the individuals receiving supported employment services with funds provided under the State Supported Employment program. In developing its reauthorization proposal, the Administration is also examining options that will help to ensure that State agencies continue to invest appropriate levels of their resources in providing supported employment services. All States that have significant numbers of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, including States that currently have projects funded under the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers program, would be expected to use their VR funds to carry out the strategies and practices that have been found to be effective in reaching out to this population.

In 2009, nearly half of the individuals receiving services through the PWI program were also clients of the VR State Grants program. Under our proposal, PWI projects would receive their 4th and final award in FY 2011 for the project period October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012. To ensure a smooth transition, PWI projects will be encouraged to refer program participants with significant disabilities to their State VR agency if the individual is not a current participant of the VR program and to refer individuals who do not require the services of the comprehensive VR program to other community resources, such as the local One-Stop Center. In addition, where appropriate, State VR agencies would be encouraged to purchase placement services from those entities that previously provided such services to VR consumers using funds from the PWI grant. Furthermore, State VR agencies would be encouraged to identify and adopt effective practices in developing collaborative relationships with the business community and innovative strategies for job development and placement.

Although many people with disabilities are obtaining jobs and remaining employed, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities is still unacceptably high. For example, in its *2008 Annual Disability Status Report* (March, 2010), the Cornell University Rehabilitation and Research Center on Disability Demographics and Statistics reported results from the 2008 American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009) indicating that of those aged 21-64 (U.S. working age population), people with sensory, physical, mental, and/or self-care disabilities are much less likely to be employed (either full-time or part-time) than people without such disabilities (39.5 percent versus 79.9 percent respectively) and that only 25.4 percent of working-age individuals with disabilities were working full-time/full-year. In addition, the survey found that only 8.7 percent of working-age individuals with disabilities who were not working were actively looking for employment compared to 21.4 percent without such disabilities.

The VR State Grants program is the primary Federal vehicle for assisting individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, to prepare for, obtain, or retain employment. Nationally, there are about 1 million individuals with disabilities in various phases of the vocational rehabilitation process within the VR system, about 93 percent of whom are individuals with significant disabilities. If a State VR agency cannot serve all eligible persons,

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

it must serve first those individuals with the most significant disabilities under an “order of selection.” For fiscal year 2011, the State Plans of 36 of the 80 State VR agencies documented that the agency had established an order of selection, one agency less than in fiscal year 2010. This total includes 59 percent of the general and combined State VR agencies and 12 percent of the State VR agencies serving blind individuals. In fiscal year 2010, preliminary waiting list data from the RSA Cumulative Caseload Report show that there were a total of about 109,970 individuals with disabilities on the waiting list for VR services at some point during the fiscal year. At the end of the fiscal year 2010, VR agencies reported a total of about 33,130 individuals remaining on waiting lists (6,000 fewer than in 2009), 77 percent of whom were individuals with significant disabilities. However, the number of individuals on a waiting list varies considerably among State agencies operating under an order of selection. For example at the end of FY 2010, 15 agencies had 6 or fewer individuals on a waiting list, while 11 agencies had lists that ranged from over 1,200 to 4,480 individuals. In addition, while 7 of the 10 agencies that had over 1,000 individuals on the waiting list at the end of FY 2009 showed significant reductions in their waiting list at the end of FY 2010, 8 VR agencies that had relatively small numbers of individuals on the waiting lists in FY 2009 had large increases in the number of individuals on their waiting lists in FY 2010.

State VR agencies also play a major role under the Ticket to Work program administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA). Under this program, most Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries between the ages of 18 and 64 are offered a “ticket,” which they may use to obtain employment services, VR services, and other support services from an employment network of their choice to enable them to enter the workforce. State VR agencies have the option of participating in the Ticket to Work program as an employment network or remaining in the traditional reimbursement system, including the option to elect either payment method on a case-by-case basis. Under the traditional system, the VR program is reimbursed for the costs of services provided to SSDI and SSI beneficiaries with a single payment after the beneficiary performs substantial gainful activity (for 2010 and 2011, earnings in excess of \$1,000 per month for non-blind disabled beneficiaries and \$1,640 per month for blind beneficiaries) for at least 9 consecutive months. As of October 21, 2010, about 235,346 Ticket-Holders are working with a State VR agency under the traditional reimbursement arrangement and have not assigned their tickets. In addition, about 32 percent of the 50,120 tickets that have been assigned have been assigned to State VR agencies and about 68 percent have been assigned to other employment networks.

American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The Administration requests \$37.449 million for grants under the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) program. The request would enable the Department to provide support for about 81 tribal VR projects, including 7 new awards and 74 continuation awards. These funds assist tribal governments to provide a program of VR services, in a culturally relevant manner, to American Indians with disabilities residing on or near reservations.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Individuals receiving services ¹	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Individuals with significant disabilities as a percent of all individuals receiving services	93%	93%	94%
Total number of cases closed	496,000	496,000	496,000
Individuals whose cases were closed and received VR services	331,000	331,000	331,000
Individuals achieving an employment outcome ²	172,000	172,000	172,000
Individuals with significant disabilities as a percent of all individuals achieving an employment outcome	92%	92%	93%

Notes: Data for fiscal years 2010, 2011, and 2012 are projections based on actual data for fiscal years 2008 and 2009 and preliminary 2010 data from the RSA Quarterly Cumulative Caseload Report (RSA-113). Estimates for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 reflect the combination of the program's regular appropriations and the appropriation received under the Recovery Act.

¹ Includes all eligible individuals who received VR services during the fiscal year.

² Number of individuals who exited the program after receiving services and achieved an employment outcome.

American Indian vocational rehabilitation services

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Project funding:			
New project funding	\$19,099 ¹	\$3,525	\$2,786
Continuation funding	\$23,723	\$33,884	\$34,623
Peer review of new award applications	\$77	\$40	\$40
Number of projects:			
New projects	28	6	7
Continuation	<u>54</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>74</u>
Total projects	82	82	81

¹ Of the total amount of new project funding, about \$1.087 million was awarded to support the FY 2011 continuation costs of 6 new projects awarded in FY 2010. In addition, the total amount of new project funding includes \$5.45 million that will be used to support the FY 2011-2014 continuation costs of 3 new projects awarded in FY 2010. These additional funds which became available as a result of the reallocation of funds under the VR State Grants program carried out pursuant to section 110(b)(2) will be used to support all 5-years of these 3 new AIVRS projects from the slate of grantees that were recommended for funding as a result of the FY 2010 competition.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2012 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Fiscal year 2010 data for the VR State Grants and the American Indian VR Services programs will be available in April of 2011.

VR State Grants

Goal: Individuals with disabilities served by the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grant program will achieve high quality employment.

Objective: *Ensure that individuals with disabilities who are served by the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grant program achieve employment consistent with their particular strengths, resources, abilities, capabilities, and interests.*

Measure: Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that assist at least 55.8 percent of individuals receiving services to achieve employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	71	82
2008	76	79
2009	78	61
2010	80	
2011	70	
2012	75	

Measure: Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that assist at least 68.9 percent of individuals receiving services to achieve employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	65	63
2008	66	67
2009	66	42
2010	67	
2011	60	
2012	65	

Additional information: This measure assesses the performance of State VR agencies in meeting program performance indicator 1.2 established in program regulations pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act. Indicator 1.2 measures the percentage of individuals who

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

the State VR agency determines to have achieved an employment outcome out of all the individuals who exit the VR program after receiving services. In order to pass indicator 1.2, a general or combined agency must achieve an employment outcome rate of 55.8 percent, while an agency for the blind must achieve a rate of 68.9 percent.

In FY 2009, neither the general and combined State VR agencies nor the State VR agencies for individuals who are blind met their performance targets. Compared to FY 2008, 10 fewer general and combined State VR agencies and 6 fewer State VR agencies for individuals who are blind met the performance criteria. In FY 2009, there was a significant drop in performance on this measure due to the large decrease in the number of individuals who obtained an employment outcome (12 percent). This decline was widespread with 78 percent of the 80 State VR agencies reporting a decrease in employment outcomes. Among States, decreases in employment outcomes ranged from less than 1 percent to almost 50 percent. The decrease in employment outcomes can, at least in part, be attributed to the general decline in available employment opportunities. For example, many VR agencies in States experiencing high rates of unemployment for the general population have had a difficult time assisting the individuals with disabilities they serve to obtain employment. However, there were a few VR agencies in States with high rates of unemployment that did not experience a decrease in employment outcomes, including some of which reported an increase in employment outcomes.

Measure: Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that assist at least 85 percent of individuals with employment outcomes to achieve competitive employment.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	96	96
2008	96	96
2009	97	93
2010	97	
2011	97	
2012	97	

Measure: Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that assist at least 65 percent of individuals with employment outcomes to achieve competitive employment.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	75	79
2008	79	79
2009	79	92
2010	80	
2011	85	
2012	90	

Additional information: This measure is derived from Section 106 performance indicator 1.3, which measures the percentage of individuals who achieve competitive employment of all individuals who achieve employment. Competitive employment is defined under the State VR program as work in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

basis in an integrated setting, and for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled. In order to pass indicator 1.3, a general or combined agency must achieve a rate of 72.6 percent, while an agency for the blind must achieve a rate of 35.4 percent.

The GPRA measure is more ambitious and has a higher performance criterion than the State VR agency performance indicator 1.3 because in FY 2006 nearly all of the VR agencies passed indicator 1.3. Under the GPRA measure, general and combined agencies must assist at least 85 percent of individuals with employment outcomes to achieve competitive employment, and agencies for the blind must assist at least 65 percent of individuals with employment outcomes to achieve competitive employment. Despite the decline in the number of employment outcomes, States have been fairly successful in sustaining the percentage of competitive employment outcomes. In FY 2009, the target for the general and combined agencies was not met because of a slight decline in performance. In FY 2009, 4 of the 56 general and combined agencies did not meet the performance criterion, including 1 combined State agency and 3 of the territories. The percentage of individuals with employment outcomes who achieved competitive employment reported by general and combined agencies in 2009 ranged from 65 percent to 100 percent with a median of 98 percent. In 2009, only 2 agencies for the blind did not meet their criterion. The percentage of individuals with employment outcomes who achieved competitive employment reported by agencies for the blind ranged from 38 percent to 100 percent with a median of 90 percent.

Measure: Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies for which at least 80 percent of the individuals achieving competitive employment have significant disabilities.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	89	82
2008	90	88
2009	89	87
2010	89	
2011	89	
2012	89	

Measure: Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind for which at least 90 percent of the individuals achieving competitive employment have significant disabilities.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	100	100
2008	100	100
2009	100	100
2010	100	
2011	100	
2012	100	

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

Additional information: This measure is derived from the Section 106 performance indicator 1.4, which measures the percentage of individuals achieving competitive employment who have significant disabilities. In order for a general or combined agency to pass this indicator, at least 62 percent of individuals achieving competitive employment must have a significant disability. The GPRA measure for general and combined agencies is more ambitious and has a higher performance criterion than performance indicator 1.4. Under this measure, at least 80 percent of individuals achieving competitive employment must have a significant disability.

For an agency for the blind to pass indicator 1.4, at least 89 percent of individuals achieving competitive employment must have a significant disability. The performance criterion for agencies for the blind on the GPRA measure performance is only slightly higher, 90 percent compared to 89 percent. In fiscal year 2009, 87 percent of general and combined agencies met the 80 percent criterion, a 1 percent decrease from the prior year and the GPRA target of 90 percent was not met. All of the agencies for the blind met the 90 percent performance criterion and the 100 percent GPRA target was met as well.

Efficiency Measures

Objective: *Ensure that State VR agencies demonstrate effective fiscal management.*

The Department has established three efficiency measures to ensure that State VR agencies demonstrate effective fiscal management. These include cost per employment outcome, cost per participant, and a consumer expenditure rate.

Measure: Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that demonstrate an average cost per employment outcome between \$6,000 and \$16,500.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	73	64
2008	70	68
2009	70	52
2010	70	
2011	70	
2012	70	

Measure: Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that demonstrate an average cost per employment outcome of no more than \$38,000.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	71	63
2008	71	54
2009	71	46
2010	71	
2011	71	
2012	71	

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

Additional information: At the national aggregate level, the cost per employment outcome can be calculated by dividing the total appropriation (minus the set-aside for Grants to Indians) by the total number of individuals who achieved an employment outcome. The sources of data for this measure are State agency data from the RSA-113 Caseload Report and RSA final State agency allocation tables. In fiscal year 2009, the average annual cost per employment outcome was \$16,274. However, there was a significant difference in the cost per employment outcome between general and combined State VR agencies and agencies serving the blind. The average cost per employment outcome for general and combined State VR agencies was \$15,945 compared with \$38,872 for agencies for the blind. In FY 2009, only 29 of the 56 (52 percent) general and combined State VR agencies had an average cost per employment outcome between \$6,000 and \$16,500 – 9 fewer agencies than in FY 2008. Twenty-six agencies had an average cost per employment outcome above \$16,500 and one agency had an average cost per employment outcome of less than \$6,000. Of the 24 agencies for the blind, 11 (46 percent) had an average cost per employment outcome of no more than \$38,000 – 2 fewer agencies than in FY 2008. There is wide variation in the cost per employment outcome across these agencies. The cost per employment outcome for general and combined State VR agencies (excluding the outlying areas) ranged from about \$5,701 to \$44,704. The cost per employment outcome for agencies for the blind ranged from \$14,125 to \$107,701.

The *Study of Variables Related to State VR Agency Performance* (October 2004) indicated that whatever measure of cost efficiency is used, large differences are evident by agency type (blind, combined, general). For example, agencies for the blind are much smaller and still must maintain the same core administrative infrastructure. They also do not benefit from economies of scale available to larger agencies. In addition, on average, blind consumers spend more time in the program and the average cost of purchased services tends to be higher.

Measure: Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that demonstrate an average cost per participant between \$1,200 and \$3,300.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	73	61
2008	73	63
2009	70	59
2010	70	
2011	65	
2012	65	

Measure: Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that demonstrate an average cost per participant of no more than \$8,000.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	69	63
2008	70	63
2009	70	58
2010	70	
2011	65	
2012	65	

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

Additional information: A common efficiency measure for job training programs is the cost per participant. At the national aggregate level, the cost per participant is calculated by dividing the total appropriation (minus the set-aside for Grants to Indians) by the total number of eligible individuals who received VR services. The sources of data for this measure are State agency data from the RSA-113 Caseload Report and RSA final State agency allocation tables. For FY 2009, the average annual cost per participant for general and combined State vocational rehabilitation agencies was \$2,851 with a range (excluding the outlying areas) of \$1,333 to \$6,043. For agencies for the blind, the average annual cost per participant ranged from \$3,604 to \$18,065, with an average of \$7,291. In FY 2009, 33 of the 56 (59 percent) general and combined State VR agencies had an average cost per participant between \$1,200 and \$3,300 – two agencies less than in FY 2008. Of the 24 agencies for the blind, 14 (58 percent) had an average cost per participant of no more than \$8,000, one agency less than in FY 2008.

Measure: Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that demonstrate an average annual consumer expenditure rate of at least 83 percent.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	72	73
2008	73	80
2009	74	79
2010	74	
2011	75	
2012	80	
Measure: Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that demonstrate an average annual consumer expenditure rate of at least 70 percent.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	65	58
2008	67	54
2009	65	58
2010	65	
2011	65	
2012	65	

Additional information: The third efficiency measure examines the percentage of State VR agencies whose consumer service expenditure rate is at or above a specified level. Under this measure, the consumer service expenditure rate is calculated by dividing the agency's consumer service expenditures by the agency's total VR program expenditures. The sources of data for this measure are State agency data from the RSA-2 report and RSA final State agency allocation tables. In fiscal year 2009, the target was exceeded with 44 of 56 general and combined VR agencies (79 percent) demonstrating an average annual consumer expenditure rate of at least 83 percent. The average annual consumer service expenditure rate for all general and combined State vocational rehabilitation agencies was 88 percent with a range (excluding the outlying areas) of 62 percent to almost 100 percent. In 2009, 14 of the 24 agencies for the blind (58 percent) had an average annual consumer expenditure rate of at least 70 percent. The

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

average annual consumer service expenditure rate for all agencies for the blind ranged from 31 percent to 89 percent, with an average of 71 percent.

American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Performance Measures

Goal: To improve employment outcomes of American Indians with disabilities who live on or near reservations by providing effective tribal vocational rehabilitation services.

Objective: *Ensure that eligible American Indians with disabilities receive vocational rehabilitation services and achieve employment outcomes consistent with their particular strengths, resources, abilities, capabilities, and interests.*

Measure: The percentage of individuals who leave the program with employment outcomes, after receiving services under an individualized plan for employment.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	65	67
2008	66	66
2009	66	61
2010	66	
2011	66	
2012	66	

Additional information: The numbers of American Indians with disabilities achieving an employment outcome continue to increase annually along with the number of projects funded under the program. In fiscal year 2009, the 77 projects operating in that fiscal year (projects funded with fiscal year 2008 appropriations) assisted a total of 1,690 American Indians with disabilities to achieve an employment outcome. Data for fiscal year 2009 show that 61 percent of the 2,769 individuals with disabilities who exited the program after receiving services achieved an employment outcome and the target for this measure was not met. There is a wide variation in the percentage of individuals who achieved an employment outcome reported by AIVRS projects. In 2009, the percentage of individuals achieving an employment outcome reported by 76 of the projects ranged from 26 percent to 100 percent. One of the new projects in 2009 was unable to place any individuals because of delays in getting the project underway.

There are several factors that may have accounted for the decrease in performance on this measure. Probably the most significant factor was the poor economic conditions in 2009. American Indian tribes already experience some of the worst economic conditions in the country with limited labor markets and very few job opportunities. When those same economic conditions affect communities outside the reservation, it compounds the difficulty in achieving employment outcomes. A second factor may be that there were more projects operating in 2009 (74 in 2008 compared to 77 in 2009), including 24 that were in the first year of their grant. A third factor may be that many projects experienced natural disasters during the 2009 fiscal year, including but not limited to prairie fires, forest fires, tornadoes, floods, and snow/ice storms.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

Efficiency Measures

Objective: *Ensure that AIVRS projects demonstrate effective fiscal management.*

The Department has established two efficiency measures to ensure that AIVRS projects demonstrate effective fiscal management. These include cost per employment outcome and cost per participant.

Measure: The percentage of AIVRS projects that demonstrate an average annual cost per employment outcome of no more than \$35,000.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	73	73
2008	66	64
2009	68	71
2010	70	
2011	72	
2012	75	

Additional information: This AIVRS program efficiency measure examines the percentage of AIVRS projects having a cost per employment outcome within a specified range. The source of data for this measure is the AIVRS Annual Reporting Form. At the national level, the average cost per employment outcome for this program is calculated by dividing the amount of the set-aside, excluding peer review costs, by the total number of individuals who achieved an employment outcome. Using this method for the AIVRS program in fiscal year 2009, the overall average cost per employment outcome was approximately \$20,700 with a median of \$23,700. However, the cost per employment outcome varied significantly across projects, ranging from about \$4,000 to \$327,900.

The target for this measure was exceeded in FY 2009, with 55 of the 77 AIVRS projects reporting (71 percent) demonstrating an average cost per employment outcome of no more than \$35,000.

Measure: The percentage of AIVRS projects that demonstrate an average annual cost per participant of no more than \$10,000.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	Set baseline	78
2008	76	82
2009	77	83
2010	78	
2011	82	
2012	82	

Additional information: At the national level, the average annual cost per participant for this program is calculated by dividing the amount of the set-aside, excluding peer review costs, by the total number of individuals who received services under an Individualized Plan for

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

Employment (IPE). In fiscal year 2009, AIVRS projects reported serving a total of over 7,500 American Indians with disabilities. For fiscal year 2009, the overall average annual cost per participant was approximately \$4,600. The average cost per participant ranged from \$1,363 to \$163,957 with a median of \$5,272. In fiscal year 2009, 64 of the 77 AIVRS projects (83 percent) had an average cost per participant of no more than \$10,000.

Targets for FYs 2007 – 2010 were established based on the number of individuals served in the reporting period whose IPE was developed during the current 5-year grant cycle. These targets did not take into account individuals served in the reporting period whose IPE was developed in the previous 5-year grant cycle because data collected on these individuals were not reliable. However, RSA has since made improvements in its reporting system and provided guidance that makes these data more reliable. Beginning with FY 2008, grantees report all individuals receiving services with current grant funds, including individuals whose IPE was developed in the previous 5-year grant cycle. The targets for FYs 2011 and 2012 are higher than previous targets to reflect the fact that the including both groups of individuals in the calculation of performance on this measure lowers the cost per participant and increases the percentage of projects that have a cost per participant of no more than \$10,000.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Client assistance State grants

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title I, Section 112)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$12,288 ²	\$12,288	0

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Client Assistance Program (CAP) provides grants to States for services to assist eligible individuals and applicants for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State grants program and other programs, projects, and services funded under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act). Services are provided to help eligible individuals and applicants understand the rehabilitation services and benefits available under the Act, and to advise them of their rights and responsibilities in connection with those benefits. Assistance may also be provided to help eligible individuals and applicants in their relationships with those providing services under the Act, including assistance and advocacy in pursuing legal and administrative remedies to ensure the protection of their rights. State VR agencies must inform VR consumers about the services available from the CAP and how to contact the CAP. States must operate a CAP in order to receive VR State grant funds.

States and outlying areas have adopted different organizational structures for meeting the requirement to establish a CAP in each State. Each Governor designates a public or private agency to operate a CAP. This designated agency must be independent of any agency that provides services under the Act, except in cases where the Act “grandfathered” agencies providing services under the Act. In the event one of these “grandfathered” agencies is restructured, the Act requires the Governor to redesignate the CAP in an agency that does not provide services under the Act.

Current designations include the following:

- 28 of the Governors have designated their State Protection and Advocacy (P&A) system to provide CAP services;
- 12 of the Governors have designated the VR agency to provide services; and
- the remaining 16 Governors have designated other entities to provide CAP services.

Of the 16 CAPs located outside State VR agencies and not within the P&A system, 5 are located in the Governor’s Office; 6 are located in another State agency, office, or government-

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Client assistance State grants

sponsored commission or group; 4 are located in legal aid and nonprofit organizations; and 1 is located in a private law firm.

The CAP is a current-funded formula grant program. When appropriations exceed \$7.5 million, funds are distributed on the basis of population, with a minimum allotment of \$100,000 to each of the 50 States, D.C., and Puerto Rico and \$45,000 to each of the outlying areas. When the appropriation increases, the Act also requires the Secretary to increase the minimum allotments for States and outlying areas by a percentage not greater than the percentage increase in the appropriation. The fiscal year 2010 allotments were based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2008. The fiscal year 2011 allotments are based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates published in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 State distributions are based on the April 1, 2010 Census data released on December 21, 2010.

Grantees may carry over unobligated Federal funds for an additional year.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2007	\$11,782
2008	11,576
2009	11,576
2010	12,288
2011 CR	12,288

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$12.288 million for the Client Assistance program (CAP) in fiscal year 2012, the same as the fiscal year 2011 CR level. This request will help ensure that individuals with disabilities who are applying for or receiving services funded under the Rehabilitation Act will receive appropriate services and have access to administrative, legal, and other appropriate remedies when needed to protect their rights.

Data collected in FY 2009 show that, CAPs nationwide responded to 57,537 requests for information and provided extensive services to 6,936 individuals. In FY 2009, slightly more than 93 percent of those cases in which extensive services were provided involved applicants for or recipients of services from the VR program. In 96 percent of all cases, issues related to the delivery of VR services. In 33 percent of the cases closed, CAPs enabled the individuals to advocate for themselves through the explanation of policies; 19 percent of cases closed resulted in the development or implementation of an individualized plan for employment (IPE); and 17 percent of closed cases resulted in the reestablishment of communication between the individuals and other parties. In addition, 66 percent of the cases requiring action by the CAP on behalf of the individual were resolved in the individuals' favor.

CAPs also address numerous systemic issues related to the provision of VR and other services under the Rehabilitation Act. CAPs utilize a variety of methods to achieve changes in policies and practices, including individual advocacy, participation in policymaking process, and

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Client assistance State grants

negotiation with State agencies. In fiscal year 2009, 45 out of the 56 CAPs (80 percent) reported that systemic advocacy resulted in changes in policy and practice benefiting individuals with disabilities. This is an increase from fiscal year 2008, when 39 out of the 56 CAPs (70 percent) reported that systemic advocacy resulted in a change in policy and practice.

Examples of CAP activities during fiscal year 2009 include:

In Arizona, CAP assisted a 41-year-old man with Chemical Hyperactivity Syndrome, which is a genetic disorder. The consumer was found eligible for VR services in July 2008, and his employment goal was to become an elementary school teacher. He chose this goal because it matched his interests and would accommodate his disability because elementary school students rarely wear fragrances. His VR counselor questioned his employment goal and wanted him to submit to a psychological evaluation before she would develop his IPE even though he had already provided all necessary medical documentation. Due to the counselor's insistence on a psychological evaluation, the client did not have an approved IPE by the date VR placed all clients without an IPE on a waiting list for services. The counselor also wanted to close the client's case for lack of cooperation. CAP argued that the medical documentation provided was sufficient for the client's employment goal. The VR agency agreed with CAP, and instructed the counselor to write the client's IPE. At the meeting to develop the IPE, the counselor proposed to include a requirement for the client to job shadow an elementary school teacher as part of his IPE. CAP and the client disagreed with this addition to the IPE. The counselor was overruled by the agency and the IPE was written without the job shadowing requirement. The client is now enrolled in college and obtaining his teaching degree.

In Illinois, CAP assisted a consumer to resolve issues relating to the consumer's vocational goal and her pursuit of a master's degree. VR had argued that her bachelor's degree qualified her to become a lab technician, even though she had always stated she wanted to become a Forensic Scientist. The CAP successfully appealed on her behalf and VR was ordered to change her vocational goal to Forensic Scientist. Not only was the consumer successful in completing her master's degree, but she was able to work as an intern in a lab during her last semester of school and was offered a full-time job as a Forensic Scientist in this same lab.

In Maryland, a 48-year old male with a back injury contacted CAP for assistance in gaining approval from VR for funding of a short-term training program to assist him in becoming employed as an Auto Insurance Estimator. The individual had work experience in auto repair, but could no longer physically perform the job duties. During his rehabilitation program, he worked to complete his GED and take some short courses to help expand his employment potential. He repeatedly, over the course of a few years, returned to a request for specific training in automotive estimating. VR felt the training was not necessary for employment in his field, and offered him more intensive job or on-the-job training development as a compromise. He attempted to use these services without success. One of the barriers in obtaining approval for the training he sought was that the training was out of State, and it was not accredited or approved by a higher education commission. The consumer eventually requested an appeal hearing regarding the training denial. CAP provided legal representation, and the appeal was settled in the consumer's favor through formal mediation. The consumer then participated in and completed auto estimating training, and subsequently obtained employment in his chosen field.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Client assistance State grants

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Information inquiries/referrals	57,500	57,500	57,500
Individuals provided case services	6,900	6,900	6,900

Note: Data for fiscal years 2010 through 2012 are projected from actual data collected for fiscal year 2009 in which CAPs responded to 57,537 requests for information and provided extensive services to 6,936 individuals. Data for fiscal year 2010 will be available in December of 2011.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2012 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: To provide assistance and information to help individuals with disabilities secure the benefits available under the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program and other programs funded under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Objective: *Accurately identify problem areas requiring systemic change and engage in systemic activity to improve services under the Rehabilitation Act.*

Measure: The percentage of CAPs that reported that their systemic advocacy resulted in changes in policy or practice.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	60	61
2008	60	70
2009	60	80
2010	60	
2011	67	
2012	70	

Additional information: CAPs address numerous systemic issues related to the provision of VR and other services under the Act. CAPs utilize a variety of methods to achieve changes in policies and practices, including individual advocacy, participation in the policymaking process, and negotiation with State agencies. Permanent systemic change is very difficult to achieve, and some States undertake activities that may take years to accomplish. All 56 CAPs currently

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Client assistance State grants

are engaged in work that should ultimately result in systemic change, but this indicator measures only those States that report their activity as complete. Data are compiled from narrative reports submitted by all CAPs. Onsite compliance reviews are conducted and random sample of files are cross-checked with reported data to verify the data quality. The grantees input their data into the RSA Management Information System (MIS), which has edit checks to verify the accuracy of the information entered into the data fields.

The baseline was established in fiscal year 1999, when 24 of the 56 CAPs (43 percent) reported changes in practice or policy due to their efforts. In fiscal year 2006, 34 of the 56 CAPs (61 percent) reported success with their efforts, exceeding the target for the fifth successive year. In light of these data the Department raised the targets from 54 percent to 60 percent for fiscal years 2007 through 2010. Based on improved performance in 2008 and 2009, the Department has increased the targets for future years. The fiscal year 2010 data will be available in December 2011.

Objective: *Resolve cases at lowest possible level.*

Measure: The percentage of cases resolved through the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR).		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	84	98
2008	84	98
2009	85	99
2010	86	
2011	98	
2012	98	

Assessment of progress: The performance targets through fiscal year 2008 were based on fiscal year 2001 data, which showed 84 percent of CAP cases were resolved through alternative dispute resolution (ADR). The target was first exceeded in fiscal year 2006, when 4,977 of the 5,855 closed cases (85 percent) were resolved through ADR techniques. However, data from fiscal year 2007 reflect a huge increase to 98 percent of the closed cases being resolved through ADR. The percentage of cases being resolved through the use of ADR held steady at 98 percent during 2008, and rose to 99 percent in 2009. The target established for fiscal year 2011, 98 percent, was established by taking the average of actual performance from fiscal years 2007 through 2009. The data for fiscal year 2010 will be available in December 2011.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Supported employment State grants

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI, Part B)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$29,181 ²	0	-\$29,181

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The Administration is not proposing to authorize this program through appropriations language for FY 2012.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Supported Employment (SE) State Grants program is to assist States in developing collaborative programs with appropriate public and private nonprofit organizations to provide supported employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. Under this formula grant program, State vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies receive supplemental funds to assist VR consumers with the most significant disabilities in achieving the employment outcome of supported employment. The term “supported employment” includes both competitive employment and working in an integrated setting toward competitive employment. Individuals in competitive employment must earn at least the minimum wage.

Supported employment placements are achieved by augmenting short-term vocational rehabilitation services (supported employment services) with ongoing support provided by other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations (extended services) for the duration of that employment. State VR agencies provide time-limited services for a period not to exceed 18 months, unless a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been established in the individualized plan for employment (IPE). The IPE for an individual with a goal of supported employment must specify the expected extended services that will be needed to support the individual in integrated employment and identify the source of extended services at the time the IPE is developed, including the basis for determining that there is a reasonable expectation that those services will become available.

An individual's potential for supported employment must be considered as part of the assessment to determine eligibility for the Title I Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program. The requirements pertaining to individuals with an employment goal of supported employment are the same in both the Title I VR State Grants program and the Title VI-B SE State Grants program. A State VR agency may support an individual's supported employment services solely with VR State Grant funds, or it may fund the cost of SE services in whole or in part with funds under the SE State Grants program. Title VI-B SE funds may only be used to provide supported employment services and are essentially used to supplement Title I funds.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Supported employment State grants

To be eligible for this current-funded formula grant program, States must submit a supplement to their Title I VR State Grants program plan. Funds are distributed on the basis of population, except that no State receives less than \$300,000, or one-third of 1 percent of the sums appropriated, whichever is greater. The minimum allotment for Territories is one-eighth of 1 percent of the sums appropriated. The fiscal year 2010 allotments were based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2008. The fiscal year 2011 State allotments are based on the July 1, 2009 estimates published in December 2009. States may carry over unobligated funds to the next fiscal year.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2007.....	\$29,700
2008.....	29,181
2009.....	29,181
2010.....	29,181
2011 CR	29,181

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

No funds are requested for fiscal year 2012 for the Supported Employment (SE) State Grants program. The Administration requests that funding for this program be consolidated with the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program. The Administration recognizes that supported employment can be an effective strategy in assisting individuals with the most significant disabilities to obtain competitive employment in integrated settings. However, because supported employment is now an integral part of the VR State Grants program, the Administration believes that there is no longer a need for a separate funding stream to ensure the provision of such services. The proposed program consolidation will reduce unnecessary administrative burden at the national, State, and local levels and will enhance efforts to assess and improve the provision and effectiveness of supported employment services. The Administration's proposal would ensure that each State receive under the VR State Grants program at least the amount it received in FY 2011 under the separate formula grant programs being consolidated. In developing its reauthorization proposal, the Administration also plans to propose language to help ensure that State agencies continue to invest appropriate levels of their resources in supported employment.

The Supported Employment State Grants program was first authorized under the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986 to provide supplemental grants to assist States in developing collaborative programs with public agencies and private nonprofit organizations for training and time-limited post-employment services for individuals with the most severe handicaps. At that time, supported employment was a new promising practice in employing individuals who traditionally would not have achieved employment in the integrated labor market. Initially, many rehabilitation professionals were skeptical about its feasibility and concerned about the potential costs. As a supplemental source of dedicated funds, the SE State grant program provided an incentive for State VR agencies to provide supported employment services.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Supported employment State grants

In addition, from 1986 to 1996 the Department of Education supported a number of supported employment discretionary grant projects designed to further develop and expand the provision of supported employment services. These included a total of 54 State-wide systems change grants to 47 States, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands; 2 national scope projects; 2 national technical assistance projects; and a total of 66 community-based supported employment projects. Finally, in fiscal year 1997, the Department awarded a 3-year cooperative agreement to support the Supported Employment Consortium whose purpose was to identify and disseminate replicable policies, models, and supported employment practices appropriate for dissemination and to provide technical assistance.

Data from the FY 2009 RSA 911 Case Service Report show that approximately 36,000 individuals whose cases were closed that year after receiving services had a goal of supported employment on their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) at some time during their participation in the VR program. This number includes individuals who received support for SE services entirely through funds provided under the VR State Grants program and those individuals whose services were, at least in part, supported with funds under the SE State Grants program. On a national level, individuals who had a goal of supported employment represented about 11 percent of the total individuals whose cases were closed in FY 2009 after developing an IPE. However, information on how State VR agencies use their SE State Grant funds to supplement their VR funds is limited. State agencies report whether any SE funds were used to provide services to an individual with a supported employment goal, but not the amount of SE funds that were expended for such individuals. Because VR agencies may use funds from one or both funding sources to purchase supported employment services, information on the actual cost of providing SE services to an individual with a SE goal, including individuals who did or did not obtain a supported employment outcome is unavailable. Data collected through the RSA 911 report indicate that there is significant variation in SE practices and the use of SE funds among State agencies.

The Department is currently conducting a study to obtain a more in-depth understanding of how State VR agencies provide SE services for their consumers, including how the supplemental SE appropriation is used in conjunction with VR State Grant funds to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities to achieve a supported employment outcome. The Department anticipates that collection of the survey data will begin in March 2011. The Department is also providing funds to the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Vocational Rehabilitation, funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, to obtain additional information on supported employment. This purpose of this sub-study is to identify the role and impact of the VR program within the larger supported employment delivery system. Examples of topics to be investigated include providers and sources of funding for supported employment, the availability of supported employment services, SE placements, and extended services, and methods or models of collaboration and coordination in providing SE services that can be identified within or across States.

In addition, as a part of a current effort to re-design the VR program data collections, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) will be identifying SE-related data elements that are needed to better monitor the services, service costs, and the outcomes achieved by individuals with a supported employment goal. The proposed consolidation, in conjunction with the efforts described above, will facilitate the Department's efforts to monitor and assess

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Supported employment State grants

national and State performance in obtaining supported employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities and in identifying those agencies that need technical assistance.

The SE State Grants program has accomplished its goal. State VR agencies recognize supported employment as an integral part of the VR program and a viable employment option for individuals with the most significant disabilities. State VR agencies continue to spend VR State Grant funds (including State matching funds) to provide supported employment services for those individuals who require such services to participate in the integrated labor market. State VR agencies must also give priority to serving individuals with the most significant disabilities, many of whom may require supported employment services. The Department expects that State VR agencies will continue to provide supported employment services in FY 2012 through the consolidated VR State Grants program to at least as many individuals as they did under the two separate authorities.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Individuals with a supported employment IPE goal who received services and exited the program.	36,125	36,560	37,000
Employment outcomes: ¹	20,195	20,440	20,685
Supported employment outcomes ²	15,135	15,320	15,500
Employment without supports in an integrated setting ³	4,810	4,865	4,925
Other employment outcomes ⁴	250	255	260
Minority outreach	\$292	\$292	0

Note: Estimates for FYs 2010, 2011, and 2012 are based on actual 2007, 2008, and 2009 closure data from the RSA-911 Case Service Report for all VR consumers with a supported employment goal identified on their IPE (including consumers who received SE services with funds provided under the VR State Grants and/or under the Supported Employment State Grants programs).

¹ Includes employment outcomes for VR consumers who had or are estimated to have a supported employment goal.

² Of the individuals who had a supported employment goal, the number who were employed in an integrated setting and receiving ongoing support services.

³ Of the individuals who had a supported employment goal, the number who met the employment outcome criteria for the VR State Grants program but who were not receiving ongoing support services.

⁴ Of the individuals who had a supported employment goal, the number who met the employment outcome criteria for the VR State Grants program who were either self-employed, employed in a Business Enterprise Program, a family worker, or a homemaker.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Supported employment State grants

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided for this program and the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program in previous years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by these programs. With the exception of the program's efficiency measure, performance on supported employment measures would continue to be assessed in FY 2012 as part of GPRA reporting for the VR State Grants program.

Goal: Individuals with significant disabilities with a goal of supported employment will achieve high quality employment.

Objective: *Ensure that individuals with significant disabilities with a supported employment goal achieve high quality employment.*

Measure: Of those individuals with significant disabilities who had a supported employment goal and achieved an employment outcome, the percentage who obtained competitive employment, including individuals who receive supported employment services funded under the VR State Grants program and/or the Supported Employment State Grants program.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	93	94
2008	94	92
2009	94	91
2010	95	
2011	95	
2012	95	

Additional information: Individuals with a supported employment goal who achieve an employment outcome may be working in competitive employment (employment at least at the minimum wage in an integrated setting) or may be working in an integrated setting toward competitive work (receipt of the minimum wage). In fiscal year 2009, 20,089 individuals, or 56 percent of individuals whose service records were closed after receiving services who had a SE goal, including both consumers who received SE services from funds provided under the VR State Grants and under the Supported Employment State Grants programs, achieved an employment outcome. Of those who achieved an employment outcome, 91 percent of individuals with a supported employment goal achieved a competitive employment outcome. In FY 2009, performance on this measure decreased slightly from the previous year and it was the second year for which the performance target has not been met or exceeded for this measure. Fiscal year 2009 RSA 911 Case Service Report data also show that 75 percent of the individuals who had a SE goal and achieved an employment outcome obtained a supported employment outcome (employment in the integrated labor market and receiving ongoing

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Supported employment State grants

supports) and about 90 percent of those obtaining a supported employment outcome were in competitive employment. Data for FY 2010 are expected to be available in April 2011.

Measure: Average weekly earnings for individuals with significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007		197
2008	Set a Baseline	199
2009	199	188
2010	203	
2011	203	
2012	203	

Additional information: The Department established a new measure in FY 2008 to monitor the average weekly earnings of individuals with significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome. As previously stated, individuals with significant disabilities in supported employment may be working in competitive employment or may be working in an integrated setting toward the receipt of the minimum wage. Performance data for this measure are calculated by dividing the average weekly earnings for all individuals who obtained a supported employment outcome with earnings by the total number of individuals who obtained a supported employment outcome with earnings. The performance data do not include individuals served by State VR agencies for the Blind. Performance targets were set based on 2007 and 2008 data.

For the performance group, the average weekly earnings of individuals with significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome were \$188 in FY 2009, a decrease of \$11 from the previous year and the performance target was not met. However, the median average weekly earnings for agencies in the performance group increased from \$178 to \$182. In 2009, average weekly earnings ranged from a low of \$88 to a high of \$380. About half of the performance group reported a decrease in average weekly earnings as compared to 2008. However, very large decreases in the performance of a few States had a large impact on overall performance. In 2009, average hourly earnings were about the same as in 2008 (about \$8 per hour). Although on a national level there was only a slight decrease in average hours worked, 23.8 hours in 2008 compared to 22.7 in 2009, about 67 percent of the agencies in the performance group reported a decrease in average hours worked as compared to 2008. Data for five VR agencies, including one State and four territories are not included in the FY 2009 calculation for this measure. In FY 2008, the State agency reported 330 individuals who achieved a supported employment outcome and average weekly earnings that were significantly above the median. However, the State agency did not include data on individuals who achieved a supported employment outcome in its FY 2009 report.

Efficiency Measure

Objective: *Ensure that State VR agencies effectively use Supported Employment Grant funds to achieve supported employment outcomes.*

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Supported employment State grants

Measure: Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that demonstrate at least 30 supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 received in SE Grant funds.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007		65
2008	Set a baseline	79
2009	75	67
2010	75	
2011	75	

Additional information: The efficiency measure developed for the Supported Employment State Grants program examines the percentage of State VR agencies for which the number of supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 received in SE Grants funds is within a specified range. For the purpose of this measure, the number of supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 is calculated by dividing the reported number of individuals that achieved a supported employment outcome by the amount of a State agency's SE allocation and multiplying the result by 100,000. The performance range and targets were established based on fiscal year 2007 and 2008 data. The performance data do not include individuals served by State VR agencies for the Blind or the 4 territories because they receive less than \$100,000. In 2009, performance on this measure dropped to just above its 2007 level and the target was not met. Almost 75 percent of the performance group experienced a decline in performance on this measure due to the overall decrease in the number of supported employment outcomes in 2009.

For the performance group, the average number of supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 was 71 in 2007 and 73 in 2008. In 2009, the average number of supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 dropped to 63. However, among agencies in the performance group, this number ranged from 2.3 (Hawaii) to 201 (New York), with a median of 47 supported employment outcomes. A FY 2012 performance target has not been set for the efficiency measure because the Department is proposing to eliminate the separate funding authority for the SE Grants program and consolidate these supplemental funds with those provided under the larger VR State Grants program.

Other Performance Information

An independent study focusing on the post-program experiences of four subgroups of former VR consumers, including persons with mental illness, persons with mental retardation, persons who received Social Security disability benefits, and transitional youth was completed in 2009. These subgroups comprise the vast majority of the individuals who receive supported employment services. Information from an analysis of the post-program experiences of individuals in the sample who had a goal of supported employment while participating in the VR program is included in the August 2009 final report. A summary of some of the findings is provided below. Please note that the supported employment subsample (SE group) represents only 25.3 percent of the 2,758 study respondents.

The majority of former VR consumers who had a goal of supported employment (SE) had cognitive impairments as their primary disability (55 percent), followed by about 25 percent with

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Supported employment State grants

psychosocial impairments and about 8 percent with other mental impairments. Individuals in this group were more likely to be male (58 percent) and most were white (70 percent). About a third of the SE group were high school graduates (or had an equivalency certificate), one-third had a special education certificate of completion or attendance, and 15 percent had completed some secondary education but did not have a high school diploma at case closure. In addition, 57 percent of the SE group had received services under an Individualized Education Program while in school. About 60 percent of the SE group had achieved an employment outcome at the time of case closure. Among those with an employment outcome, 64 percent obtained employment with supports in an integrated setting (a supported employment outcome); 34 percent were employed without supports in an integrated setting; and less than 1 percent were self-employed. The average weekly earnings amount at case closure was \$162.24.

At the time of the study interview, an estimated 92 percent of the SE group reported that they had ever worked for pay. About 74 percent had worked in the past 12 months, 77 percent of whom were working at the time of the interview. Among those who were working in the past 12 months, about 69 percent reported that they were working at the same job they had 12 months earlier and about 75 percent worked part-time. On average, the amount of the SE consumer's weekly paycheck (after taxes and other deductions) in the past 12 months was \$228.16, with an average hourly wage rate of \$7.44. However, almost one quarter of those who worked in the past 12 months were not working at the time of the study interview. For slightly less than half of these, the choice was their own to stop working. Just less than one-third of the respondents who were not working at the time of the interview had looked for work within the past 4 weeks. Among those who provided one or more reasons for why they were not working at the time of the study interview, 42 percent stated that they could not find work, 28 percent wanted to keep medical coverage, 26 percent stated they wanted to keep their disability or workers' compensation benefits, 26 percent stated they were without reliable transportation, 31 percent needed accommodations, and 24 percent stated they were sick or ill.

Study respondents were asked about the services they sought and received over the past 12 months in their communities. About 30 percent of the SE group received services from a State VR agency and 9 percent used a State employment facility or one-stop center. Just over one third were familiar with the Ticket to Work program and about 16 percent had used it. In addition, study respondents reported that in the past 12 months they had received job search assistance (26 percent), job placement assistance (20 percent), and personal assistance services (12 percent). Among those who were employed, 54 percent received on-the-job support and most received accommodations on the job.

When asked to identify their most important source of income, 55 percent of the SE group cited public support and benefits. Another 23 percent identified personal income, and 21 percent cited support from family and friends. Of the SE group, 34 percent said they received SSDI within the past 12 months, 95 percent of whom were receiving SSDI at the time of the interview. Similarly, about 36 percent received SSI within the past 12 months, 96 percent of whom were receiving SSI at the time of the interview. Most of the SE group (83 percent) reported that they currently had some form of medical or health insurance. About 46 percent of the SE group said they had Medicare, 61 percent had State medical or health insurance, 11 percent had medical insurance from other public sources, and 15 percent had private insurance through other means.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Migrant and seasonal farmworkers

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 304)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$2,239 ²	0	-\$2,239

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The Administration is not proposing to authorize this program through appropriations language for FY 2012.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) program makes comprehensive vocational rehabilitation (VR) services available to migrant and seasonal farmworkers with disabilities, with the goal of increasing employment opportunities for them. Projects also develop innovative methods for reaching and serving this population. Emphasis is given in these projects to outreach, specialized bilingual rehabilitation counseling, and coordination of VR services with services from other sources. Projects provide VR services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers and to members of their families when such services will contribute to the rehabilitation of the worker with a disability. Discretionary grants are limited to 90 percent of the costs of the projects providing these services. This is a current-funded program.

The Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers program is administered in coordination with other programs serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers, including programs under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act, the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, and the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000)
2007	\$2,279
2008	2,239
2009	2,239
2010	2,239
2011 CR	2,239

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

No funds are requested for the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) program in fiscal year 2012. Instead of seeking separate funding for this program, the Administration proposes to

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Migrant and seasonal farmworkers

consolidate the funding for this small, duplicative competitive grants program with the larger Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State grants program. The Administration believes that consolidating this small program into the much larger VR State grants program will eliminate administrative inefficiencies and help focus Federal efforts on ensuring that States provide effective appropriate services to all eligible individuals, including the population served under this program.

The authorizing legislation for the VR State grants program requires States to submit a plan to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) that describes how the State will provide services to all eligible individuals within that State. The statute contains many provisions to ensure that State VR agencies reach and serve all individuals with disabilities within the State, including minority, unserved, and underserved populations--

- States must provide for the cooperation, collaboration, and coordination with other components of the Statewide workforce investment system. Specifically, States must describe their interagency cooperation with, and utilization of the services and facilities of, Federal, State and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the Department of Agriculture's Under Secretary for Rural Development.
- States must provide an assurance that the State will not impose a residence requirement that excludes from services any individual who is present in the State.
- States must conduct comprehensive, statewide assessments describing the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the States, particularly the VR service needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR State grants program. Using the statewide assessment, States must identify their goals and priorities in carrying out their programs.
- States must provide a description of the strategies they will use to address the needs identified in the comprehensive, statewide assessment and to achieve the identified goals and priorities, including outreach procedures to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR State grants program.

Specialized services, such as those provided through the MSFW program, can be beneficial in meeting the complex needs of migrant or seasonal farmworkers with disabilities. However, the specialized services provided under the MSFW program are services all State VR agencies should be providing to reach and appropriately serve underserved populations under the VR State grants program and should not depend on the availability of separate funding. For example, outreach activities in churches and community centers that identify farmworkers with disabilities would also assist in identifying other persons with disabilities who visit these places. The hiring of bilingual counselors benefits all consumers who are monolingual in a non-English language, whether those consumers are farmworkers or not. In addition, the provision of transportation services for rural areas will benefit all rural residents, whether farmworkers or not.

The Administration believes that continuing to provide separate funding for this small, narrowly targeted program is not the best way to ensure appropriate and high quality services for special populations who may be underserved under the VR State grants program. With the increase in

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Migrant and seasonal farmworkers

funding that the Administration is requesting for the VR State grants program, State VR agencies would have additional resources to provide services that would benefit migrant or seasonal farmworkers, along with other unserved or underserved populations. The Administration believes that RSA should focus its monitoring and technical assistance efforts on improving the performance of the VR State grants program, including its delivery of services to and the outcomes of its most needy and vulnerable populations.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Program funding:			
New projects	\$632	\$497	0
Continuation projects	1,565	1,700	0
Minority outreach	18	22	0
Peer review of new award applications	<u>24</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	2,239	2,239	0
Number of projects:			
New projects	5	4	0
Continuation projects	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	13	13	0

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: To increase employment opportunities for migrant and seasonal farmworkers who have disabilities.

Objective: *Ensure that eligible Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers with disabilities receive Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services and achieve employment.*

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Migrant and seasonal farmworkers

Measure: The percentage of migrant or seasonal farmworkers with disabilities served by both VR and the VR Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers projects who were placed in employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	65	61
2008	65	55
2009	65	67
2010	65	
2011	65	

Additional information: During fiscal year 2009, the 13 States with MSFW projects served 189 individuals, placing 126 in employment (66.7 percent). Seven of the grantees met or exceeded the performance target for fiscal year 2009. The six remaining States reported employment rates that ranged from 0 to 53.8 percent. The States without a Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) project reported serving 1,835 migratory workers in fiscal year 2009 and placed 1,082 in employment (59 percent). This represents an improvement over fiscal year 2008, when the 13 States with a MSFW reported placing 55 percent of those served into employment, whereas the States without projects reporting placing 58 percent served into employment. However, RSA is concerned about the decrease in the overall numbers served by those States with a MSFW project. In fiscal year 2007, 280 individuals were served; in fiscal year 2008, 218 were served; and in fiscal year 2009, only 189 individuals were served. Through its grantee-conference call oversight, RSA is working with the 13 grantees in order to assess the reasons for the decline in the numbers served.

A FY 2012 performance target has not been set for this measure because the Administration is proposing to eliminate the separate funding authority for the MSFW program and consolidate these funds with funds provided under the larger VR State grants program.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Projects with industry

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI, Part A)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$19,197 ²	0	-\$19,197

¹ The GEPA extension expired in September 30, 2004. The Administration is not proposing to authorize this program through appropriations language for FY 2012.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Projects with Industry (PWI) program is to create and expand job and career opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the competitive labor market by engaging the participation of business and industry in the rehabilitation process. PWI projects promote the involvement of business and private industry through Business Advisory Councils (BACs) that identify jobs and careers available in the community and provide advice on needed skills and training. BACs are required to identify job and career availability within the community, consistent with the current and projected local employment opportunities identified by the local workforce investment board for the community under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA).

This current-funded program provides job development, job placement, job training, and career development services, and, to the extent appropriate, training services to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain or advance in employment in the competitive labor market. Projects must determine eligibility for services in a manner consistent with section 102 of the Rehabilitation Act.

PWI grants are made to a variety of agencies and organizations, including business and industrial corporations, community rehabilitation programs, labor organizations, trade associations, and foundations. Competitive grants are awarded for a period of up to 5 years and may not exceed 80 percent of the total cost of a project. New awards may be made only to projects proposing to serve geographic areas that are unserved or underserved by the PWI program.

PWI grantees must provide to the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) an annual report of project operations in accordance with the established program standards and compliance indicators. Data and information contained in the report include the number of individuals with disabilities served, the number of individuals with disabilities who

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Projects with industry

achieved a competitive employment outcome, improvement of participants' employment status and earning power following services, and employment retention. In addition, continuation awards may be made only to grantees that are carrying out the provisions of their approved grant application. In order to receive continuation funding for the second and subsequent years, grantees must meet the above requirements and also demonstrate compliance with the performance indicators by submitting data for the most recent complete project year. If a grantee does not demonstrate compliance on the basis of the previous year's data, the project has an additional opportunity to demonstrate compliance with the standards by submitting data from the first 6 months of the current project year.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2007.....	\$17,293 ¹
2008.....	19,197
2009.....	19,197
2010.....	19,197
2011 CR	19,197

¹ In FY 2007, funds amounting to \$2,245,030 were not needed to make planned continuation awards because six projects did not demonstrate sufficient performance to receive continuation funding and one project declined its FY 2007 award. These funds were transferred to the Demonstration and Training program (section 303 of the Rehabilitation Act).

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

No funds are requested for the Projects with Industry (PWI) program in fiscal year 2012. The Administration proposes to reduce program duplication and eliminate administrative inefficiencies by consolidating PWI into the much larger Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program. The Administration is requesting a corresponding increase in funding for VR State Grants to offset the elimination of funding for the PWI program. PWI is a good candidate for consolidation into VR State Grants because PWI projects provide the same types of services and serve the same target population that is served by State VR agencies. In fact, nearly half of the individuals served by PWI grantees also receive services under VR State Grants.

The PWI program was established in 1968 under the demonstration authority in section 304 (d) of that year's amendments to the Rehabilitation Act, and was first funded in 1970. When the Act was reauthorized in 1978, the program's authority was moved to the new Title VI, Employment Opportunities for Handicapped Individuals, and the program's requirements were expanded. The program, created to engage the talent and leadership of private industry as partners in the rehabilitation process, authorized jointly financed projects with individual employers and other entities to provide training and placement in realistic work settings. Unfortunately, few private businesses were interested in operating PWI projects. A 1985 Department-funded evaluation of the PWI program found that most PWI projects were operated by traditional rehabilitation service providers and only a small number of projects were operated by the business sector. To ensure the involvement of business and industry in the program, PWI was amended in 1986 to

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Projects with industry

require the establishment of business advisory councils. Since that time, the Business Advisory Council (BAC) has been the distinguishing feature of the PWI program.

Today, the business community is routinely involved in job training and employment programs. In 1998, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was enacted with the purpose of consolidating, coordinating, and improving employment, training, literacy, and vocational rehabilitation programs. Recognizing the importance of involving the business sector in job training and employment programs, WIA created local workforce investment boards in each State that include business, industry, labor, and other representatives. Two of the major functions of the BAC, identification of job and career availability within the community and the skills necessary to perform the jobs and careers identified, are now functions of the local workforce investment board under WIA. The State VR agency is represented on the local board as a partner of WIA's one-stop delivery system. In addition, since 1992, the VR State agency has been required to have four representatives of business, industry, and labor on its State Rehabilitation Council. PWI has outlived its original role as a demonstration program and no longer needs to exist as a separate program in the VR system.

A performance review conducted in 2004 found that the PWI program design is duplicative of the much larger and more comprehensive VR State Grants program, which serves the same target population and provides similar services. In addition, a Department-funded evaluation of the PWI program published in December 2003 found that the group of individuals served by the PWI program is very similar to the population served by VR at the aggregate program level and that most PWI projects serve a specific subset of the population served by one or more local VR offices. Typically, PWI is one of several programs operated by a host organization, and the specific role of the PWI project at many, especially larger, grantee organizations is shaped by the other programs available at the host organization.

As the program operates today, the major contribution of PWI projects to the VR system is the provision of job placement services. Few PWI projects currently provide job skill training to individuals with disabilities. Where available, VR agencies often refer their consumers to local PWI projects for job placement services.

If funding for the program is consolidated into VR State Grants, as proposed, the Administration anticipates that State VR agencies will absorb the job placement functions of PWI programs and continue providing placement services to their consumers. To ensure a smooth transition, PWI projects will be encouraged to refer program participants with significant disabilities to their State VR agency if the individual is not a current participant in the VR program and to refer individuals who do not require VR services to other community resources, such as the local One-Stop Center. Where appropriate, VR State agencies will also be encouraged to purchase placement services from those entities that previously provided such services to VR consumers using funds from the PWI grant. Furthermore, State VR agencies will be encouraged to identify and adopt effective practices in developing collaborative relationships with employers and innovative strategies for marketing and job placement. The proposed Workforce Investment Fund would provide opportunities for validating and replicating these effective employment and placement practices, setting the stage for significant improvements to services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Projects with industry

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Continuation projects:	\$17,843	\$18,152	0
Number	60	60	0
Average Award	\$297	\$303	0
Minority outreach	\$1,354 ¹	\$1,045 ¹	0
Total	\$19,197	\$19,197	0

¹ These allocations to section 21 minority outreach activities exceed 1 percent because seven PWI projects did not demonstrate sufficient performance to receive continuation awards totaling \$1,162 thousand in 2010 and \$853,000 in 2011. As a result, these funds are used for minority outreach activities.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program. Fiscal year 2012 performance targets have not been set for any of the measures for this program because the Administration is proposing to eliminate the separate funding authority for PWI and consolidate the funds with those provided under the larger and more comprehensive VR State Grants program.

Goal: To facilitate the establishment of partnerships between rehabilitation service providers and business and industry in order to create and expand employment and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Objective: *Ensure that PWI services (through partnerships with business and industry) result in competitive employment, increased wages, and job retention for individuals with disabilities.*

Measure: Percentage of individuals served who were placed into competitive employment.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	55	63
2008	56	63
2009	57	48
2010	63	
2011	63	

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Projects with industry

Additional information: In FY 2009, the 67 PWI projects in operation completed the first year of their 5-year grant. The projects served a total of 5,454 individuals with disabilities and placed 2,622 of those individuals (48 percent) in competitive employment, falling considerably below of the target placement rate. The placement rate may have decreased partially because of cyclical factors. The FY 2009 reporting period was the first year after the 2008 PWI competition. After previous competitions, grantee performance started from a low base and improved throughout the 5-year grant cycle as the projects gain more experience and become more familiar with the requirements of the program. Fiscal year 2010 data are expected in April 2011.

In assessing program performance, it should be noted that there is wide variation among grantees in the data reported and in their performance. For example, although the average number of individuals placed per project was 40, the number ranged from 1 to 165 with a median of 35. Project placement rates ranged from 4 percent to 76 percent with a median of 56 percent. Similarly, while the average number served per project was 83, the number ranged from 18 to 275 with a median of 73. In addition, these employment statistics do not hold over time. Grantees reported that 6 months after placement, only 18 percent of individuals with significant disabilities placed in employment by the program were still employed. In 22 of the projects, none of the individuals with significant disabilities who were placed in employment retained their jobs for 6 months.

Measure: The percentage of exiting individuals who are placed in competitive employment.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	85	87
2008	85	76
2009	85	78
2010	85	
2011	85	

Additional information: The percentage of exiting individuals obtaining employment fell below the target level in 2009. Grantee performance on this measure significantly declined from 2007 to 2008 most likely because RSA provided new instructions to grantees for completing the data collection instrument. RSA issued these new instructions in response to data inconsistencies found in grantee reports from prior years. In FY 2009, the highest placement rate for exiting participants reported by a project was 100 percent and the lowest was 13 percent, with a median among all grantees of 82 percent. Fiscal year 2010 data are expected in April 2011.

Measure: Average increase in weekly earnings in dollars of individuals who are placed in competitive employment.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	\$248	\$270
2008	250	254
2009	255	238
2010	263	
2011	263	

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Projects with industry

Additional information: In fiscal year 2009, the average change in earnings for participants placed in competitive employment from the time of project entry was \$238, a slight decrease from the level reported for 2008 and below the target level. The average change in earnings reported by projects ranged from \$111 to \$536, with a median of \$210. Fiscal year 2010 data are expected in April 2011.

Efficiency Measures

The PWI program has two efficiency measures. These are the average annual cost per placement and the average annual cost per participant.

Measure: The percentage of Projects With Industry projects whose annual average cost per placement is no more than \$7,000.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007		75
2008		81
2009		39
2010	77	
2011	77	

To calculate this measure, the annual cost per placement is determined by dividing the annual Federal project funds by the total number of placements in the reporting period. There was wide variation among grantees in their reported performance data. The average annual cost per placement for the 66 projects sharply increased from \$5,144 in fiscal year 2008 to \$24,180 in fiscal year 2009. This decrease in efficiency reflects the considerable decline in the number of program participants placed in competitive employment in fiscal year 2009 compared to the prior year. Results varied considerably among grantees, with the annual cost per placement ranging from \$2,118 to \$341,681, with a median of \$8,217. This measure does not have a target for 2009 because it is a relatively new efficiency measure. Fiscal year 2010 data are expected in April 2011.

Measure: The percentage of Projects With Industry projects whose annual average cost per participant is no more than \$4,500.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007		80
2008	79	84
2009	79	67
2010	80	
2011	80	

A common efficiency measure for job training programs is the cost per participant. Cost per participant is calculated as annual Federal project funds divided by the total number of persons served during the reporting period. The program's performance on this measure did not meet the target. For fiscal year 2009, the average annual cost per participant was \$4,716, with a range of \$1,319 to \$17,238, and a median of \$3,629. All of these statistics increased

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Projects with industry

considerably over the prior year, indicating a significant decline in program efficiency. Fiscal year 2010 data are expected in April 2011.

Other Performance Information

Grantee Performance on Program Compliance Indicators

PWI grantees must provide an annual performance report on project operations in accordance with the established program standards and compliance indicators. In order to receive continuation funding for the second year of their grant and subsequent years, grantees must demonstrate compliance with the performance indicators established in program regulations by submitting data for the most recent complete project year. Program compliance indicators place an emphasis on services to individuals who are considered most in need of PWI services due to their impaired capacity to obtain competitive employment. In 2009, approximately 88 percent (4,823) of the total number of individuals served and 91 percent (2,389) of the total number of individuals placed in competitive employment were individuals with significant disabilities. Furthermore, 74 percent (4,023) of all the individuals served and 75 percent (1,958) of the total number of individuals placed had been unemployed at least 6 months at the time of project entry.

In FY 2009, 7 (10 percent) of the projects did not pass the compliance indicators. Most of these failing projects did not pass the placement indicator, a primary indicator. To pass the placement indicator, a project must place at least 55 percent of the individuals they serve into competitive employment. A relatively high number of projects may have failed to pass the placement indicator partially because of cyclical factors. The FY 2009 reporting period was the first project year after the FY 2008 PWI competition. After previous PWI competitions, grantee performance started from a low point and improved throughout the 5-year grant cycle as the projects gained more experience and became more familiar with the requirements of the program. If a grantee does not demonstrate compliance on the basis of the previous year's data, the grantee has an opportunity to demonstrate compliance with the standards by submitting data from the first 6 months of the following project year. In order to receive continuation funding, these projects must demonstrate sufficiently improved performance on the indicators during this 6-month period.

Evaluation of the Projects With Industry Program

Assessment of the PWI program is limited by the credibility of the data. In a Department-funded evaluation of the PWI program published in December 2003, the evaluators documented numerous concerns with the data collected and reported by PWI projects. In their review of participant files maintained by the 30 PWI projects visited during the study, the evaluators frequently encountered files lacking essential information, raising doubts about the quality and accuracy of the data that projects submit in compliance indicators reports. The project survey asked all respondents to report "the number of persons who achieved placement (i.e., a competitive employment outcome for a minimum of 90 days) during FY 2001," information identical to that required by the compliance indicators. A comparison of data submitted by projects on the two forms (i.e., project survey and compliance indicator reports), each of which asks for data from FY 2001, found that 19 of the 92 projects that responded reported different

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Projects with industry

numbers for persons placed during the year, including several that differed by more than 50 percent. The final report (available at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/leg/rehab/eval-studies.html#pwj>) states that the fact “that one-fifth of the projects provided inconsistent information on such a fundamentally important variable as the number of persons placed raises serious questions about the accuracy of other data reported in compliance indicator submissions.”

In response, RSA issued new instructions to grantees in 2008 designed to encourage accurate completion of the data collection instrument. Reported performance levels declined on some measures in the first year after the instructions were issued, indicating that these new instructions may have improved the quality of the data. However, the latest data still show signs of scattered irregularities. RSA will continue to work with the projects to improve the accuracy of the annual reports

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Training

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 302 (a)-(g)(2), (h)-(i), Section 303(c)-(d))

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$37,766 ²	\$33,251	-\$4,515

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Training program is to ensure that skilled personnel are available to meet the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities assisted through the vocational rehabilitation (VR), supported employment, and independent living programs. The program supports training and related activities designed to increase the number of qualified personnel providing rehabilitation services. Grants and contracts are awarded to States and public and nonprofit agencies and organizations, including institutions of higher education, to pay all or part of the cost of conducting training programs.

Awards may be made in any of 31 long-term training fields, in addition to awards for continuing education, short-term training, experimental and innovative training, and training interpreters for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and persons who are deaf-blind. These training programs vary in terms of content, methodology, and type of trainee. For example, the Long-Term Training program supports academic training grants that must direct 75 percent of the funds to trainee scholarships. Students who receive financial assistance from projects funded under the program are required to pay back such assistance, either by maintaining acceptable employment in public or private nonprofit rehabilitation agencies for a period of time after they complete their training, or by making a cash repayment to the Federal Government.

The Training program authority requires recipients of grants under the Long-Term Training program to build closer relationships between training institutions and State VR agencies, promote careers in the public vocational rehabilitation program, identify potential employers who would meet students' payback requirements, and ensure that data on student employment are accurate. Training of statewide workforce systems personnel is authorized under the Training program, and such training may be jointly funded by the Department of Labor. Statewide workforce systems personnel may be trained in evaluation skills to determine whether an individual with a disability may be served by the VR State grants program or another component of the statewide workforce system.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Training

Of the funds appropriated for the Training program, 15 percent must be used to support the In-Service Training program. This program is intended to assist State VR agencies in the training of State agency staff consistent with the State's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD). Under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, each State is required to establish procedures to ensure there is an adequate supply of qualified staff for the State agency, to assess personnel needs and make projections for future needs, and to address the current and projected personnel training needs. States are further required to develop and maintain policies and procedures for job-specific personnel standards that are consistent with certification, licensure, or other State personnel requirements for comparable positions. If a State's current personnel do not meet the highest requirements for personnel standards within the State, the CSPD must identify the steps a State will take to upgrade the qualifications of its staff, through retraining or hiring. VR State grant funds may be used to comply with these requirements.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2007	\$38,438
2008	37,766
2009	37,766
2010	37,766
2011 CR	37,766

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$33.251 million for the Training program in fiscal year 2012, a reduction of \$4.515 million from the fiscal year 2011 CR level. The request reflects two proposed consolidations. The Administration is not seeking funding for the In-Service Training program under the Training program, but is, instead, proposing the consolidation of \$5.665 million for the In-Service Training program with the larger Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State grants program, which it believes will improve the efficiency of training delivered under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act). In addition, the Administration is proposing the consolidation of two training activities currently supported under the Demonstration and Training programs for which \$1.15 million has been added to the Training program request. These consolidations would improve the alignment of programs administered under the Act. Of the FY 2012 request, approximately 95 percent of the funds would be to support continuations of prior awards; approximately \$1.3 million would be used for new awards.

The Training program is designed to support programs that provide training to new VR staff or upgrade the qualifications of existing staff. In recent years, the major focus of the program has been to address the shortage of qualified State VR agency staff by supporting long-term training programs at institutions of higher education (IHEs) to train new counselors and administrators. Currently, VR agencies are undergoing dramatic turnover in their staffs due to the retirement of a large number of qualified counselors. According to 2010 data from State VR agencies, there were 1,222 vacancies out of the 16,064 total positions nationwide in these offices. Over the next 5 years, these agencies projected an additional 5,481 vacancies. This would mean that, in the next 5 years, if State VR agencies attempt to maintain current staffing levels, they may need to hire as much as 42 percent of their staff, necessitating an increase in the number of qualified

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Training

personnel. The Department believes that similar shortages, though not as severe, will also affect other VR providers in the same timeframe. In order to address this issue, the Department has focused a considerable amount of resources in the Training program on long-term training, and is seeking to further target funds to address those areas of the greatest need. Additionally, the Act requires that 75 percent of the funds awarded to universities under the Long-Term Training (LTT) program must go directly to students for tuition assistance and stipends. Since this tuition assistance must be repaid through work in State VR agencies and other appropriate work settings, the Department believes it is the best mechanism for recruiting new graduates into the field of rehabilitation.

The Act also requires that State VR agencies provide additional training to existing staff to ensure that they meet the highest certification standard in the State. However, given the fact that the State VR agencies have the responsibility to provide needed professional development and can use the funds provided to them under the VR State Grants program for this purpose, the Department believes that providing a separate revenue stream to support in-service training through the Training program is inefficient and may, in fact, reduce State contributions to this effort. As a result, the Administration is proposing to consolidate the In-Service Training program with the larger VR State Grants program.

Currently, the Act requires that 15 percent of the funds appropriated for the Training program be set aside to support the training of existing State VR agency personnel. Under the Administration's consolidation proposal, State VR agencies would be required to reserve a specified amount of VR State Grant funds for training State agency personnel, consistent with the agency's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) plan under Title I of the Act. That amount would be equal to the funds the State was awarded for in-service training under the Training program in the most recent fiscal year, to be increased by inflation in subsequent years. In this way, the Department can increase efficiency in the distribution of these funds while ensuring that State VR agencies continue to receive and use funding to increase the qualifications of their personnel.

The Act currently authorizes Braille Training (\$300,000 in FY 2011) and Parent Information and Training Centers (\$750,000 in FY 2011) under the Demonstration and Training program. Under the Administration's FY 2012 proposal, Demonstration and Training programs would be replaced by a new program, National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services, and these two small training programs would be consolidated with the Training program. Consistent with the purposes of the Training program, the Braille Training program supports projects that provide training in the use of Braille for personnel providing VR services or educational services to youth and adults who are blind. The Parent Information and Training Centers program supports projects that provide training and information to enable individuals with disabilities, and the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or other authorized representatives of the individuals, to participate more effectively with professionals in meeting the vocational, independent living, and rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities.

In fiscal year 2012, the Department will also continue support for 10 regional Technical Assistance and Continuing Education Centers (TACE Centers), which were established in 2008 to provide technical assistance and continuing education to State VR agencies and their partners to improve their performance under and compliance with the Rehabilitation Act. The

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Training

majority of funds requested for FY 2012 would be used to support continuations in this program and the larger Long-Term Training program.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
<u>Program funding:</u>			
Long-Term Training:			
New	\$7,011	\$1,125	\$225
Continuations	<u>13,570¹</u>	<u>19,506²</u>	<u>20,204</u>
Subtotal	20,581	20,631	20,429
Technical Assistance & Continuing Education:			
New	0	190	0
Continuations	<u>8,351</u>	<u>8,039</u>	<u>8,278</u>
Subtotal	8,351	8,229	8,278
Short-Term Training:			
New	200	0	250
Continuations	<u>250</u>	<u>450</u>	<u>200</u>
Subtotal	450	450	200
Unit In-Service Training:			
New	5,665	0	0
Continuations	<u>0</u>	<u>5,665</u>	<u>0³</u>
Subtotal	5,665	5,665	0
Training of Interpreters for Individuals who are Deaf and Deaf-Blind:			
New	2,100	0	0
Continuations	<u>0</u>	<u>2,100</u>	<u>2,100</u>
Subtotals	2,100	2,100	2,100
Braille Training:			
New	0 ⁴	0 ⁴	0
Continuations	<u>0⁴</u>	<u>0⁴</u>	<u>300</u>
Subtotals	0 ⁴	0 ⁴	300
Parent Information and Training Centers:			
New	0 ⁴	0 ⁴	850
Continuations	<u>0⁴</u>	<u>0⁴</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	0 ⁴	0 ⁴	850

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Training

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
General Training			
New	\$300	0	0
Continuations	<u>0</u>	<u>\$300</u>	<u>\$300</u>
Subtotal	300	300	300
<u>Program Totals:</u>			
New	15,276	1,315	1,325
Continuations	22,171	36,060	31,383
Peer review of new award applications	319	13	10
Minority outreach	0 ⁵	378	333
Conferences	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>200</u>
Total	37,766	37,766	33,251

¹ The FY 2010 continuation awards total includes approximately \$1,409 thousand in FY 2011 continuation costs paid for with FY 2010 funds.

² The FY 2011 continuation awards total includes approximately \$504 thousand in FY 2012 continuation costs paid for with FY 2011 funds.

³ Under the Administration's FY 2012 proposal, funding for this activity is being consolidated with the VR State Grants program.

⁴ In FY 2010 and FY 2011, this activity was supported under Demonstration and Training Programs, which is proposed to be consolidated with National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services. FY 2012 amounts are equivalent to FY 2010 and FY 2011 allotments.

⁵ Section 21(b) the Rehabilitation Act requires the Rehabilitation Services Administration to set aside 1 percent of funds appropriated under this account for minority outreach activities. In FY 2010, the Training program's contribution was paid for with funds from the Projects with Industry program.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2012 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: To provide the public vocational rehabilitation (VR) sector with well-trained staff and to maintain and upgrade the skills of current staff.

Objective: To provide graduates who work within the vocational rehabilitation (VR) system to help individuals with disabilities achieve their goals.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Training

Annual Performance Measures

This program has three annual performance measures. All three of these measures are designed to provide information on various aspects of the program, including its ability to address the shortage of State VR agency counselors and staff, the proportion of scholars fulfilling their payback requirements, and the proportion of currently employed State VR agency counselors who meet their State's CSPD requirements. While these measures alone do not provide a comprehensive view of the Training program, the Department believes that they do provide evidence as to the efficacy of the program and its expenditures.

Measure: The percentage of Masters-level counseling graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through employment in State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	53	49
2008	53	37
2009	53	37
2010	53	
2011	53	
2012	53	

Additional Information: The Department annually collects data about scholars through the Payback Reporting Form, which grantees submit by November 30 of each year. After a consistent decline from 2005 to 2008, the proportion of Masters-level counseling graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through employment in State VR agencies remained at 37 percent from 2008 to 2009. While program graduates are not mandated to meet their service obligation by working in State VR agencies, the Department believes that these agencies should be the main employer of these graduates, especially given the current and future shortages outlined above. This downward trend may have been the result of a confluence of factors, including, but not limited to, the range of acceptable employment for meeting the service obligations outlined in statute, State hiring freezes, and the salary and working conditions in State VR agencies relative to those in other acceptable employment settings. According to the Act, program graduates are able to meet the requirements of their payback through employment in a number of different types of agencies, including employment in private VR agencies or in related State agencies, such as special education. As a result, some of the program's graduates are able to find acceptable employment in a number of different settings other than simply State VR agencies. When combined with the lower salary offered by State VR agencies compared to those in private firms, it may be that more program graduates are opting to seek employment elsewhere, while still meeting the terms of their service obligation. Of all Masters-level graduates, 63 percent were fulfilling their service obligation in some form of acceptable employment in 2009, with roughly 40 percent of the employed graduates opting to work in settings other than the State VR agency.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Training

Measure: The percentage of RSA-supported graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through acceptable employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	85	80
2008	85	78
2009	86	76
2010	86	
2011	87	
2012	87	

Additional Information: Using the annual Payback Reporting Form, grantees are required to report the number of RSA-supported graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through acceptable employment. This measure captures all program graduates who received RSA-supported scholarships, including those receiving undergraduate and graduate degrees and certificates. It also includes individuals maintaining acceptable employment in all acceptable agencies, not just State VR agencies. The Act requires that all program graduates maintain acceptable employment for at least 2 years for every year they received assistance from an RSA-supported grant. However, only three in four scholars are currently doing so. It is possible that some portion of program graduates are receiving waivers of their payback requirements for various reasons, including exceptions and deferrals provided in accordance with 34 CFR 386.41, such as permanent disability or full-time enrollment in an institution of higher education. It is also possible that some subset of individuals who received scholarship support opt to obtain employment in for-profit rehabilitation agencies and simply repay their initial scholarship as if it were a loan. Without further information, the Department cannot make a determination of the extent of these issues, but RSA has revised the Payback Reporting Form to be used by grantees in order to significantly improve the quality and accuracy of the data RSA receives about scholars.

Measure: The percentage of currently employed State Vocational Rehabilitation agency counselors who meet their state's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) standards.

Year	Target	Actual
2007	72	76
2008	73	76
2009	74	75
2010	75	
2011	76	
2012	77	

Additional Information: The Department annually collects data from State VR agencies about the qualifications of their currently-employed counselors. Since 2002, the proportion of currently employed State VR agency counselors who meet their State's CSPD standards consistently increased before stagnating in the last several years. The increase could be due, in part, to enhanced training made possible through the Training program. However, it could also be due

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Training

to the natural aging of the State VR workforce. If a portion of the current State VR staff retire each year and are replaced by new counselors who must meet the State's CSPD requirements, this measure could show annual increases, even if in-service training was not adequately provided. The Department believes that both factors may have contributed to the increased qualifications of State VR counselors, but cannot definitively parse out the individual effects of each. More information is needed about this measure and the potential causes of the recent plateau.

Efficiency Measures

The Department has adopted an efficiency measure for the Long-Term Training program (LTT). This measure is the cost per Master's-level vocational rehabilitation counseling graduate.

Measure: The Federal cost per RSA supported rehabilitation counseling graduate at the Masters-level.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	\$10,702	\$14,734
2008	10,702	10,022
2009	10,702	10,036
2010	10,702	
2011	10,702	
2012	10,702	

Additional Information: The measure is calculated by dividing the total funds spent on long-term training during a fiscal year by the number of graduates supported under that program during the same fiscal year. Since 2001, the Federal cost per RSA supported rehabilitation graduate at the Masters level has typically ranged from \$10,000 to \$12,000. The higher actual cost from 2007 represented a change in the calculation methodology for this measure. Beginning in 2007, the Department calculates this measure for individual cohorts of grantees by dividing the sum of all project costs supported with Federal funds (across all years of each individual scholar's training) by the number of degree recipients who successfully completed funded training programs closing in that year. Prior to 2007, this measure was calculated using only the funds directly made available for scholarships. The decrease in cost per graduate in 2008 and 2009 is due largely to an increase in the number of graduates per grantee.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National activities to improve rehabilitation services

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 303)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
0	\$8,000	+\$8,000

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The proposed new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services (National Activities) program would support national activities that improve the administration and effectiveness of programs and services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act) or further the purposes of the Act in promoting the employment and independence of individuals with disabilities in the community.

Under the Administration's proposal, funds provided under this program would be awarded through grants and contracts and used to support projects and activities designed to improve program performance and the delivery of vocational rehabilitation and independent living services under the Act, including technical assistance. Funds could be used for activities to identify program needs, potential promising practices at the State and local level, and topics for research and evaluation by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). Activities funded under this program would also help to inform decisions about the strategies and practices to be tested and evaluated under the proposed Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF). In addition, this program would serve as a major vehicle for assisting State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies and others in learning about and implementing effective practices, including evidence-based practices identified under WIF. Funds could also be used to increase the Department's knowledge of State agency policies and practices and to improve program monitoring. This activity would be current-funded.

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$8 million to establish a new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program that would replace the Demonstration and Training program. This new program would also consolidate the resources used to support technical assistance and projects designed to improve program performance and the delivery of vocational rehabilitation and independent living services under the Evaluation and Program Improvement programs.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National activities to improve rehabilitation services

The Administration believes that the consolidation of activities under these programs will enable the Department to conduct more effectively and efficiently the types of activities currently authorized under these programs and ensure that the knowledge and products obtained from the Rehabilitation Service Administration's (RSA) activities, as well as activities funded by NIDRR are utilized by program staff to assist State VR agencies and other grantees to improve employment and independent living outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

In FY 2012, about \$4.7 million (59 percent) of the funds requested would be used to support continuation costs for projects initiated in previous years under the Demonstration and Training, Program Improvement, and Evaluation programs. Most of these funds (\$3.7 million) would be used to support the third year of the model demonstration to improve outcomes for individuals served by State VR Agencies who are receiving benefits under Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). Fiscal year 2012 funds would also be used to continue support for ongoing technical assistance activities and program performance and improvement tasks initiated under the Program Improvement and Evaluation programs in FY 2011.

About \$3.1 million of the National Activities funds requested in FY 2012 would be used to support new projects that would be conducted in coordination with NIDRR. Examples of topics that are currently under consideration by RSA include:

- Consistent with the recent Executive Order 13548, identify and disseminate information on State VR agency strategies and practices that may be effective in assisting VR consumers to obtain employment in the Federal workforce.
- Preparing youth with significant disabilities for employment and independent living by providing increased opportunities for career exploration, internships and structured work experience.
- Achieving and retaining high quality employment outcomes for challenging populations such as individuals with psychiatric disabilities, autism, and older workers with disabilities.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Continuation funding:		
SSDI model demonstrations	0 ¹	\$3,661
Technical assistance and program improvement	0 ²	<u>1,080</u>
Subtotal	0	4,741
New project funding	0	3,149
Peer Review	0	30
Minority Outreach	0	<u>80</u>
Total	0	8,000

¹ FY 2011 project costs (\$2,254 thousand) were funded under the Demonstrations and Training program.

² FY 2011 projects costs (\$1,287 thousand) were funded under the Program Improvement and Evaluation programs.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Demonstration and training programs

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 303(b))

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$11,601 ²	0	-\$11,601

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The Administration is not proposing to authorize this program through appropriations language for FY 2012.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Demonstration and Training programs are authorized to provide competitive grants to, or contracts with, eligible entities to expand and improve the provision of rehabilitation and other services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act) and to further the purposes and policies of the Act. These current-funded discretionary programs also are authorized to support activities that increase the provision, extent, availability, scope, and quality of rehabilitation services under the Act, including related research and evaluation activities.

Section 303(b) of the Rehabilitation Act authorizes the support of activities to demonstrate methods of service delivery to individuals with disabilities, as well as activities such as technical assistance, systems change, special studies and evaluation, and dissemination and utilization of project findings. Eligible entities include State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies, community rehabilitation programs, Indian tribes or tribal organizations, other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations, and for-profit organizations. Competitions may be limited to one or more type of entity.

Sections 303(c) and (d) of the Act authorize a parent information and training program and a Braille training program.

The majority of projects currently supported under Demonstration and Training programs are designed to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities by expanding and improving the availability and provision of rehabilitation and other services. These projects are intended to increase employment outcomes for individuals for whom vocational rehabilitation services were previously unavailable or who previously did not take advantage of such services.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Demonstration and training programs

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

	(\$000s)
2007	\$8,756
2008	10,151 ¹
2009	9,594 ²
2010	11,601 ³
2011CR	11,601

¹Includes \$3,100 thousand for Congressional earmarks.

²Includes \$3,088 thousand for Congressional earmarks.

³Includes \$5,095 thousand for Congressional earmarks.

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests no funds for Demonstration and Training programs in fiscal year 2012. The Administration believes it can improve efficiency in administration of the types of activities supported under this program and other related and overlapping programs and better meet the needs of the field for evidence-based practices and other information and assistance by replacing this program with the new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program. Under the National Activities program, the Administration would have the flexibility to strategically direct all of its program improvement resources, consolidated under one authority, to areas of greatest need, and this flexibility would help the Administration more effectively assist the field in improving outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

As part of a plan to expand the role of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) in vocational rehabilitation and employment research, NIDRR would play an increased role in the conduct of demonstration projects, in collaboration with the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). NIDRR has the capacity and the expertise to conduct scientific research and to carry out rigorous evaluations of demonstration projects and of the policies, practices, and strategies used by State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies and other service providers. Under the proposed Workforce Innovation Fund, RSA and NIDRR would work together, in collaboration with other offices and agencies as appropriate, on projects to encourage innovation and to identify and validate effective strategies for improving services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities served under the Workforce Investment Act, including those served under programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act.

The Administration is also proposing to consolidate the training activities currently supported under Demonstration and Training programs (Braille Training and Parent Information and Training Centers) with the Training program. Consistent with the purposes of the Training program, the Braille Training program, which will provide continuation awards to 3 grantees in fiscal year 2012, supports projects that provide training in the use of Braille for personnel providing VR services or educational services to youth and adults who are blind. The Parent Information and Training Centers program supports projects that provide training and information to enable individuals with disabilities, and the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or other authorized representatives of the individuals, to participate more effectively

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Demonstration and training programs

with professionals in meeting the vocational, independent living, and rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Program funding:			
SSDI/SSI Demos	\$2,047 ¹	\$2,202 ²	0 ³
Transition initiative	3,038	3,038	0 ⁴
Parent Information and Training Centers	850	850	0 ⁵
Braille Training	300	300	0
AT Reutilization	258	0	0
Unallocated	<u>0</u>	<u>5,095</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal—Program funding	6,493	11,485	0
Other program costs:			
Peer review of new award applications	13	0	0
Minority outreach	0	116	0
Earmarks	<u>5,095</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal—Other program costs	<u>5,108</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>0</u>
Total—Program funding and program costs	11,601	11,601	0
Number of projects:			
New	1	0	0
Continuation	<u>18</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>0</u>
Total—Number of projects	19	17	0

¹ The FY 2010 amount includes \$516,000 for FY 2011 continuation costs.

² The FY 2011 amount includes \$1,239 thousand for FY 2012 continuation costs.

³ Continuation costs for FY 2012 are included in the request for the National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program.

⁴ FY 2012 funding of \$850,000 for this program is included in the request for the Training program.

⁵ FY 2012 funding of \$300,000 for this program is included in the request for the Training program.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Efficiency Measure

Goal: To expand, improve or further the purposes of activities authorized under the Act.

Objective: Expand and improve the provision of rehabilitation services that lead to employment outcomes.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Demonstration and training programs

The efficiency measure for this program is the percentage of projects that met their goals and objectives as established in their original applications, or as modified during the first year. This efficiency measure is designed to determine whether the grantees are providing the services for which they were awarded funding through the competitive process. RSA reviewed applications in relation to the grantees' annual reports and found that this measure must be modified in order to accurately capture meaningful data regarding performance.

Additional information: RSA has developed performance measures tailored to the specific projects being funded under this program. For example, in fiscal year 2010, RSA established performance measures for the grantee funded under the Model Demonstration Project to Improve Outcomes for Individuals Receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Served by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies. In order to assess the success of this grantee, RSA will convene a panel of experts to conduct a review to determine the feasibility of the intervention model developed. If determined feasible, the grantee will implement and evaluate the model so that it may be replicated in other State VR agencies. RSA will assess the effectiveness of the model and the grantee's performance in the following areas:

- The degree to which the data collected from the project sites show that the intervention model results in improvement in employment outcomes, such as employment rate, wages at case closure, average hours worked, and percentage of individuals earning an amount greater than substantial gainful activity, as determined by the Social Security Administration, at closure;
- The degree to which the project recommended strategies that could be used by other State VR agencies to implement the model;
- The degree to which the grantee has disseminated its findings to State VR agencies; and
- The responsiveness of the grantee to recommendations made through the reviews conducted by the panel of experts.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Program improvement

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 12(a))

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$852 ²	0	-\$852

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The Administration is not proposing to authorize this program through appropriations language for FY 2012.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Section 12(a) of the Rehabilitation Act authorizes the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to provide technical assistance and consultative services to public and nonprofit private agencies and organizations, including assistance to enable agencies and organizations to facilitate meaningful and effective participation by individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). In addition, section 12(a) funds may be used to provide short-term and technical instruction, conduct special demonstrations, develop and disseminate educational or information materials, carry out monitoring, and conduct evaluations.

Program improvement funds are awarded through grants and contracts to provide technical assistance and to support activities that increase program effectiveness and improve accountability in order to improve the operation of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program and the provision of services to individuals with disabilities under the Act. This activity is current-funded.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

(\$000s)

2007.....	\$835
2008.....	622
2009.....	622
2010.....	852
2011 CR	852

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

No funds are requested for this program for FY 2012. Funds to support new and ongoing projects designed to increase the Department's capacity for providing technical assistance to RSA grantees, particularly State VR agencies, are requested under a proposed new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program. Under the new program, the Department

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Program improvement

would be able to conduct the types of activities currently authorized under this program and some of the activities carried out under the Evaluation and the Demonstration and Training programs. The proposed program would provide the Department with more flexibility and enhance its ability to strategically direct its limited technical assistance and program improvement resources to areas of need. The proposed consolidation would reduce duplication and improve the management of these activities, and better enable the Department to support activities that would improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

In FY 2011, Program Improvement funds will be used to provide technical assistance to RSA grantees and stakeholders through national meetings and the delivery of targeted training and technical assistance (TA) webinars. Technical assistance will focus on ensuring fiscal integrity, improving the delivery of quality services to transition-aged youth, as well as other emerging issues that are identified through the TA Network and RSA monitoring.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Funding for technical assistance and other program improvement activities:			
New	\$209	\$852	0
Continuations	<u>643</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> ¹
Total	852	852	0
Number of activities:			
New	1	2	0
Continuation	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	5	2	0

¹ Continuation costs of \$850,000 in FY 2012 for technical assistance activities are requested under the proposed National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Department has undertaken several major technical assistance projects to improve the performance of the VR State Grants program. A description of the major activities supported with Program Improvement funds that are directed towards these efforts are provided below.

National Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center (NTAC)

The NTAC assists in coordinating the activities of and sharing information among members of the TA Network established by RSA in cooperation with the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, and other RSA TA resources. The NTAC is responsible for collecting, reviewing, and disseminating TA materials; identifying and disseminating research and other information that may be useful to the TA Network; and identifying potential technical assistance providers as needed to work on issues not specifically addressed by the Regional Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) centers. NTAC, in collaboration with RSA and the TACE centers, developed a common needs assessment, common work plan, and common

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Program improvement

evaluation instruments. The NTAC also reviews the TACE centers work plans to obtain information to identify common TA needs.

The NTAC has developed a technical assistance and continuing education resource tool for the members and partners of the TA Network in an electronic format that is updated monthly as needed. After receiving Departmental approval, the four sections of this resource tool will be accessible from the RSA TA Network website (<http://neweditions.net/tace/>). The directory section includes contact information for the RSA TA Network members and current active partners of each State VR agency. The process section contains instructions for the TACE centers on how to enter information on their annual needs assessment, work plans, and evaluation into the RSA Management Information System. Using this information, the NTAC is able to identify common areas of TA need and the common work plan objectives that might provide opportunities for collaboration among the members, avoiding duplication and maximizing available resources for the delivery of TA and CE. The resource section provides links to websites of subject matter experts available to provide technical assistance and continuing education in areas needed by State VR agencies and partners, online training opportunities, archived webinars and audio presentations, as well as links to resource websites related to vocational rehabilitation. The subject matter expert portion of the resource section lists 58 available experts and their areas of expertise. The calendar section contains information on continuing education opportunities offered by TACE centers as well as conferences and other opportunities offered by others that are related to vocational rehabilitation. Information from the calendar is currently issued as a monthly e-blast newsletter to RSA TA Network members, partners, and interested stakeholders.

Quality Assurance and Program Evaluation Summit

In FY 2010, Program Improvement funds were used to jointly support a Quality Assurance and Program Evaluation Summit with the University of Washington Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation that was held in September 2010. Through its monitoring activities, RSA learned that many State VR agencies did not have a comprehensive quality assurance (QA) and program evaluation system in place. For example, typical components not included in these systems were: evaluation of the quality of services provided by community rehabilitation programs; data collection and analysis of services provided in the Independent Living for Older Individuals who are Blind and the Independent Living State Grants programs; and evaluation of the VR needs of consumers and potential consumers.

A total of 167 individuals participated in this 2-day conference enhancing their skills and knowledge about program evaluation and QA in VR. Conference sessions included topics such as utilization-focused program evaluation; collaboration with a university to enhance program efforts; and using available data to examine the long-term impact of vocational rehabilitation services on consumer employment and earnings. About 62 percent of the participants were State VR agency staff. The summit was also attended by doctoral students and faculty of rehabilitation counseling programs. Program Improvement funds were also used to support webcasts of two keynote presentations to permit participation by State agency staff and stakeholders who could not travel to attend the summit. As an adjunct to the summit, program improvement funds were used to develop a distance education series on program evaluation for VR staff and stakeholders. The series of courses are being developed from information

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Program improvement

gathered from the Summit speaker recordings, webcasts, and new curriculum. Module 1 (Performance Management in State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies - Program Evaluation) is scheduled for completion in June 2011 and Module 2 (Performance Management in State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies – Quality Assurance) is scheduled to be completed in August 2011.

Web-Based Dissemination and Technical Assistance Resource

Program improvement funds were used in fiscal years 2007 through 2009 to support the development of a Web-based Dissemination and Technical Assistance Resource (DATAR) that would provide broader access to technical assistance information such as RSA policy directives, technical assistance circulars, and information memoranda. A controlled working prototype of DATAR was completed in FY 2008; however, DATAR's implementation was significantly delayed due to a number of unanticipated problems. In April 2010, DATAR became operational integrating two primary functions into one more user-friendly website. The new interface integrates the data and document functions previously housed on two separate servers and in two separate systems and allows users to access and search technical assistance information from RSA's main website at <http://rsa.ed.gov/policy.cfm>. The improved search function can be used to locate guidance and other information using keywords, policy document numbers or dates. Previously, users could only locate such items by knowing the fiscal year in which the guidance was released. Users indicate that the system allows them to locate information they need and in much less time.

A Model Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and Training/Technical Assistance to State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies

Section 101(a)(15)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act requires State VR agencies to jointly conduct a comprehensive, statewide assessment with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) at least once every 3 years that describes the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within that State. Section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act requires State VR agencies to develop goals and priorities in carrying out their VR program during the period in which the annual State plan is in effect, based on analysis of the comprehensive Statewide needs assessment (CSNA), including strategies the State will use to address the needs identified in the CSNA. Finally, the State VR agency must submit an annual report to the Commissioner that includes an evaluation of the extent to which the State's goals were achieved and, if not achieved, the factors that impeded achievement.

In reviewing FY 2007 State Plan submissions, RSA determined that State VR agencies have not carried out CSNAs that yield data that are sufficient to inform the development of goals and priorities. Many of the CSNAs do not address all of the required elements, and more importantly, even those CSNAs that do address the required elements, do not yield sufficient information on the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities in the State. In discussions with State agencies about the quality of their CSNAs, many State agencies readily admit that they do not have the expertise to carry out a proper CSNA, and have asked RSA to provide them with a model. RSA awarded a contract in FY 2007 to develop a model CSNA to assist State VR agencies and SRCs in conducting their own CSNAs and to improve the development of goals and priorities based on the CSNA. A panel of experts was used to provide guidance in

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Program improvement

the development of the CSNA model. The conceptual model for the CSNA has been completed. The draft VR Needs Assessment Guide was released to State VR agencies, SRCs, TACE centers, TA Network members, and the NTAC in early September, 2009. Three State VR agencies piloted the use of the assessment guide with assistance from the contractor. The VR Needs Assessment Guide and Personal Computer-Delivered Training and Self-Evaluation component were revised based on feedback received from State VR agencies, SRCs, and TACE centers. The guide was completed in February 2010, along with training materials and a frequently asked questions document. The VR Needs Assessment Guide was released on the Department's website at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/rsabvrs/resources.html#needs-assessment> in May 2010.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Evaluation

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 14)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$1,217 ²	0	-\$1,217

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The Administration is not proposing to authorize this program through appropriations language for FY 2012.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Secretary uses the funds appropriated under this authority to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of programs authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (the Act), including their general effectiveness in relation to their cost, their impact on related programs, and their structure and mechanisms for delivery of services. Studies are designed to provide information for policy decisions related to program management and on effectiveness. In addition, subsection 14(f) of the Rehabilitation Act requires the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to identify and disseminate information on exemplary practices concerning vocational rehabilitation.

This is a current-funded program. Contracts and cooperative agreements are awarded for studies to be conducted by persons not immediately involved in the administration of the programs authorized by the Act.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2007.....	\$1,473
2008.....	1,447
2009.....	1,447
2010.....	1,217
2011 CR	1,217

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

No funds are requested for this program for fiscal year 2012. Funds to support new short-term projects designed to improve program performance and the delivery of vocational rehabilitation (VR) and independent living services under the Act are requested under a proposed new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program. The proposed program would

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Evaluation

consolidate, reorganize, and reduce duplication in the functions and activities carried out under this program and activities carried out under the Program Improvement and the Demonstration and Training programs. The proposed program would provide the Department with more flexibility and enhance its ability to strategically direct its limited program improvement resources to areas of need in order to better support improved employment and independent living outcomes for individuals with disabilities. In addition, the request reflects the Department's plan to transfer responsibility for conducting rigorous program evaluations and studies of programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act to the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). The proposed change would capitalize on NIDRR's research and evaluation expertise and provide for a more coordinated and rigorous approach to research, development, and knowledge translation investments in vocational rehabilitation and independent living.

RSA would continue to play a major role in identifying evaluation and research needs related to the programs it administers and would work collaboratively with NIDRR in the development of evaluation proposals. Consistent with these new roles, NIDRR is to use some of the FY 2011 evaluation funds to support a study of the VR Comprehensive System of Personnel Development under title I of the Rehabilitation Act. In 2011, RSA will use evaluation funds to launch a data initiative to assist State VR agencies in using data to better manage their programs and drive program improvement. Under this initiative, RSA will conduct an assessment of State VR data systems, including identifying how VR data is currently used by State agencies and State technical assistance needs. The remaining FY 2011 evaluation funds would be used to continue support for ongoing quantitative and qualitative analytical activities that assist the Department to assess and improve program performance. FY 2012 funds to support the development of tools to assist States agencies in using data resources more effectively under phase II of the data initiative and support for ongoing quantitative and qualitative analytical activities are requested under the new National Activities program.

In fiscal years 2009 and 2010 evaluation funds were used to support a number of new evaluations including studies of the Helen Keller National Center and the Supported Employment program, a feasibility study examining consumer attrition in the VR State Grants program, an evaluation of model transition demonstration projects, and an examination of the delivery of services under the VR State Grants Program, including the patterns of practice, agency partnerships, costs, and other factors associated with the successful delivery of such services and the achievement of program outcomes.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Evaluation

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Funding for evaluation activities:			
New	\$854	\$997	0
Continuations	\$363	\$220	0 ¹
Number of activities:			
New	3	2	0
Continuation	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	6	3	0

¹ Continuation costs of \$230,000 in FY 2012 are requested under the proposed National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

A description of some of the major studies and evaluations that were completed in recent fiscal years is provided below. Information obtained from these studies, along with information obtained from activities conducted under Program Improvement and findings from monitoring activities are being used by RSA to improve program performance.

VR Attrition Feasibility Study

In FY 2009, evaluation funds were used to conduct a study examining VR consumer attrition. Attrition has a major negative impact on program operations and resources. RSA data show that approximately 30 percent of the eligible individuals whose case records were closed in fiscal years 2007 and 2008 dropped out of the VR program before an individualized plan for employment was developed or before receiving services. In addition, State VR agencies often make significant investments in consumers only to have them drop out of the program prior to obtaining a successful employment outcome. Data from three of RSA's VR data collections were analyzed to provide a description of the national picture of State VR agency attrition, including elements such as: State and regional patterns, status categories of drop-outs, and components of the State VR agency service delivery system where attrition occurs. These data were correlated with other available information in order to identify variables that may possibly be causal factors in attrition.

The final report, completed in June 2010, presents conclusions on patterns and correlates of VR attrition and discusses what was learned from analysis of attrition at the four stages of the VR process; who leaves without employment and when; and differences in the rates of attrition by agency, agency type, and agency expenditures. Although the study provides detailed information about departure points, the report states that further study is needed to explain why cases close at each departure point or stage. Such a study would need to examine State agency practices and policies at each stage of the VR process, as well as consumers' experiences and motivations, in order to identify agencies where attrition rates indicate a potential promising practice or opportunity for improvement. However, the final report does offer some suggestions for actions that could be undertaken to address some of the findings and

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Evaluation

provide additional information on the reasons for attrition. For example, RSA's data collection could be revised to capture more detailed information on the reasons for case closure.

The findings from this analysis indicate that individuals leave at various departure points. Most attrition occurred at Stage 2, after eligibility but before development of the individualized plan for employment, (29.9 percent) and Stage 4, after the provision of VR services that did not result in employment, (42.1 percent). However, there is significant variation in attrition rates across State VR agencies at each stage. For example, the overall average percentage of consumers exiting after eligibility was 20.6 percent, but the percentage ranged from about 0.8 percent to 59.5 percent. Length of time within a stage of the VR process was found to be strongly related to attrition. Attrition individuals spent longer than average times in each stage. Agency attrition rates were also found to correlate with agency resources. Agencies with higher attrition rates had higher caseloads per counselor and per counselor support staff. In addition, agencies with higher attrition rates also had lower average expenditures per applicant. Some attrition is to be expected and may be necessary for individuals not quite ready for VR services at the time of application or during eligibility determination. However, the authors state that the volume of attrition reported suggests that improvements could be made, particularly for some subgroups of consumers, such as youth and individuals with psychosocial impairment.

Post Vocational Rehabilitation Experiences Study

The Post Vocational Rehabilitation Experiences Study (PVRES) examined the post-closure employment status of four subgroups of former VR consumers with significant disabilities who exited the program in FY 2006, including persons with mental illness, intellectual disabilities, persons who received Social Security disability benefits, and youth in transition. The study also provided information on the supports received by individuals from these groups who exited the program with a supported employment outcome. Individuals were interviewed between December 2007 and March 2008, a period of at least 14 months after case closure. The study found that of VR consumers who left VR with employment, between 63 and 74 percent were employed at the time of the PVRES interview, and between 82 and 93 percent had been employed within the 12 months prior to the interview. The survey data also indicated that between 13 and 25 percent of these consumers returned to the program and received services within the 12 months before the PVRES survey. The study findings confirm that the need for VR-type services does not end for some people when a job placement is obtained and suggest that VR services may be too time-limited for those individuals who need ongoing services to maintain employment. For example, more flexible and consistent policies regarding provision of post-employment services would allow provision of follow-up services to former consumers, as needed, perhaps over a period of 12 months or more, without the need to reopen a case.

Evaluation of Projects Demonstrating the Use of Adult Education Literacy Services by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies to Improve the Earnings of Individuals with Disabilities

The purpose of the literacy evaluation, which received its final year of project funding in 2007, was to assess whether literacy instruction (focusing upon the Wilson Reading System) and the provision of relevant support services, as carried out by five Department-funded model demonstration projects, have an impact on the literacy skills, utilization of postsecondary education, employability, and earnings and benefits of VR consumers with poor literacy skills, particularly individuals with learning disabilities. The contract was modified in FY 2007 to

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Evaluation

support follow-up data collection at 6 and 12 months after a project participant's VR case is closed. These data will assist in determining the degree to which individuals have progressed in employment and pursued additional education and/or services, and the participants' perceptions of the usefulness of the literacy services.

The final report, completed in February 2010, presents findings from the evaluation and discusses several issues related to implementing evaluations in the context of the VR system. A major finding of the study was that a program of at least 100 hours of literacy instruction is very difficult to integrate into a VR service plan. During this study, because of pressure from both the VR State agencies and consumers to help consumers find jobs quickly, it was difficult to involve consumers in an extended literacy program. Thus, the evaluation was unable to determine statistically whether providing literacy instruction to low literate VR consumers will result in measureable gains in their reading ability or in their employment outcomes. However, the report states that the qualitative data collected during site visit interviews with counselors and managers, as well as the literacy teachers and project staff, did support the contention that instruction using the literacy system being tested (the Wilson Reading System) improves recipients' reading skills and sense of self-efficacy, which in turn translates into an improved ability to obtain employment or perform on the job. This latter contention is the apparent explanation for changes in the VR systems in four of the five demonstration States that are intended to sustain aspects of the demonstration and facilitate providing literacy instruction.

A second major set of findings concerns the difficulty of conducting an experimental research study within a VR program service setting. The experimental design caused a number of problems. For example, there was resistance to assigning individuals to a control group that would not receive literacy services because of concerns that this procedure violated the principle of "consumer choice". Other problems included:

- VR consumer reactions. Although those entering the study understood that this involved participation in a literacy program, those assigned to the treatment group did not always end up attending literacy instruction. On the other hand, some consumers assigned to the control group insisted that they be permitted to receive literacy instruction, and in accordance with VR policies they were so assigned. Since participation in VR services is completely voluntary, counselors can influence but have no direct control over the participation of their consumers in specific service offerings.
- Assessing the effects of a particular intervention can take a long time. Some VR consumers enter and exit the program very quickly, while others are in the system for several years before case closure. This seriously complicates the collection of key outcome measures, especially those relating to employment. The study was able to obtain outcome data for less than 50 percent of those who entered the evaluation.
- Non-standard data collection and recording requirements pose serious problems for local VR office personnel. State VR agencies have well-established data systems that mesh with RSA's 911 data system and in which their local staff are trained. Added data collection requirements imposed by research or evaluation projects are out of the routine and require constant monitoring and refresher orientations for responsible local VR staff. The design and funding of longitudinal studies based in local VR offices need to take this need into account.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Independent living

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII, Parts B and C, and Chapter 2)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
Grants for Independent Living (proposed)	0	\$103,716	+\$103,716
Services for older individuals who are blind	\$34,151 ²	34,151	0
Independent living State grants	23,450 ²	0	-23,450
Centers for independent living	80,266 ²	0	-80,266

¹ The GEPA extension expired in September 30, 2004. The program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the independent living programs is to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities, and to integrate these individuals into the mainstream of American society. Independent living programs provide financial assistance to sustain, expand, and improve independent living services; develop and support statewide networks of centers for independent living; and foster working relationships among State independent living rehabilitation programs, centers for independent living, Statewide Independent Living Councils, Rehabilitation Act programs outside of Title VII, and other relevant Federal and non-Federal programs. The independent living programs are current-funded.

The **Independent Living State Grants** program supports formula grants to States, with funds allotted based on total population. States participating in the State Grants program must match 10 percent of their grant with non-Federal cash or in-kind resources in the year for which the Federal funds are appropriated. The fiscal year 2010 State distributions were based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates released in December 2008. The fiscal year 2011 State allotments are based on the July 1, 2009 estimates published in December 2009.

To be eligible for financial assistance under the Independent Living State Grants or Centers for Independent Living program, States are required to establish a Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). Each State must also submit a State Plan for Independent Living that is jointly developed and signed by the director of the designated State vocational rehabilitation unit(s) (DSU) and the chairperson of the SILC. States may use these funds to provide resources to support the operation of the SILC and for one or more of the following purposes:

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Independent living

- to demonstrate ways to expand and improve independent living services;
- to provide independent living services;
- to support the operation of centers for independent living;
- to increase the capacity of public or nonprofit agencies and organizations and other entities to develop comprehensive approaches or systems for providing independent living services;
- to conduct studies and analyses, gather information, develop model policies and procedures, and present information, approaches, strategies, findings, conclusions, and recommendations to Federal, State, and local policymakers;
- to provide training on the independent living philosophy; and
- to provide outreach to populations who are unserved or underserved by programs under Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act, including minority groups and urban and rural populations.

The **Centers for Independent Living (CIL)** program provides grants for consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, nonresidential, private nonprofit agencies that are designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities and provide an array of independent living services. At a minimum, centers are required to provide the core services of information and referral, independent living skills training, peer counseling, and individual and systems advocacy. Most centers are also actively involved in one or more of the following activities: community planning and decisionmaking; school-based peer counseling, role modeling, and skills training; working with local governments and employers to open and facilitate employment opportunities; interacting with local, State, and Federal legislators; and staging recreational events that integrate individuals with disabilities with their non-disabled peers.

A population-based formula determines the total amount that is available for discretionary grants to centers in each State. In most cases, the Department awards funds directly to centers for independent living. In FY 2010, 356 centers and two States received funding from the CIL program. If State funding for CIL operation exceeds the level of Federal CIL funding in any fiscal year, the State may apply for the authority to award grants under this program through its DSU. There are currently only two States, Massachusetts and Minnesota, that are both eligible and have elected to manage their own CIL programs.

In addition to funding centers for independent living, the Department must award between 1.8 and 2 percent of the funds appropriated for this program for grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to provide training and technical assistance with respect to planning, developing, conducting, administering, and evaluating centers for independent living. Each State must submit an annual performance report providing information regarding the centers' and SILCs' most pressing training and technical assistance needs.

The Rehabilitation Act establishes a set of standards and assurances that centers for independent living must meet and requires the Department to develop and publish indicators of minimum compliance with the standards. These standards and assurances are used in evaluating compliance in the following areas: philosophy, including consumer control and equal

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Independent living

access; provision of services on a cross-disability basis; support of the development and achievement of the independent living goals chosen by consumers; advocacy to increase the quality of community options for independent living; provision of independent living core services; resource development; and community capacity-building activities, such as community advocacy, technical assistance, and outreach. Each year, the Department must conduct compliance reviews of at least 15 percent of the centers and one-third of the designated State units funded under this part. The Rehabilitation Act requires the Department to award grants to any eligible agency that had been awarded a grant as of September 30, 1997. In effect, all centers funded by the end of fiscal year 1997 are "grandfathered in" and thus guaranteed continued funding as long as they continue to meet program and fiscal standards and assurances.

The **Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind** program supports services to assist individuals aged 55 or older whose recent severe visual impairment makes competitive employment extremely difficult to obtain, but for whom independent living goals are feasible. Funds are used to provide independent living services, conduct activities that will improve or expand services for these individuals, and conduct activities to improve public understanding of the problems of these individuals. Services are designed to help persons served under this program to adjust to their blindness by increasing their ability to care for their individual needs. Services provided under this program are typically not covered under private insurance or Medicaid.

Grantees are State vocational rehabilitation agencies for persons who are blind and visually impaired or, in States with no separate agency for persons who are blind, State combined vocational rehabilitation agencies. States participating in the Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind program must match 10 percent of their grant with non-Federal cash or in kind resources in the year for which the Federal funds are appropriated. When appropriations for this program exceed \$13 million—as they have since fiscal year 2000—awards are distributed to States according to a formula based on the population of individuals who are 55 years of age or older. The fiscal year 2010 allotments were based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2008. The fiscal year 2011 and 2012 State allotments are based on the July 1, 2009 estimates published in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 allotments will be revised when new population estimates by age group become available.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

The Independent Living State Grants, Centers for Independent Living, and Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind received significant one-time additional appropriations of funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act) of \$18.2 million, \$87.5 million, and \$34.3 million respectively, which totaled \$140 million. In accordance with the Recovery Act and the Rehabilitation Act, the Department obligated these funds by September 30, 2010.

The funds appropriated under the Recovery Act are considered supplemental to the regular 2009 appropriation for these programs and were added to the regular appropriations for purposes of calculating the allocations to States according to each program's statutory formula.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Independent living

The Recovery Act funds for the IL State Grants and Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind programs were awarded in April 2009. The funds appropriated under the Recovery Act are subject to the requirements of the authorizing statute for each of these programs. Since these funds are also subject to additional reporting and transparency requirements in the Recovery Act and are available for obligation for an additional year, the Recovery Act funds were awarded as separate grants from the 2009 regular appropriation.

Under the Centers for Independent Living program, any additional funds beyond those required to continue support for and provide cost of living adjustments to existing centers may be used to award new grants for centers to provide independent living services to unserved or underserved areas in each State. The significant one-time additional appropriation of \$87.5 million under the Recovery Act supported the establishment of 20 new centers in 9 States, consistent with the approved State Plans for Independent Living. These new centers will expand the provision of independent living services to unserved or underserved areas of these States.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

(\$000s)

Independent living State grants

2007	\$22,588
2008	22,193
2009	23,450
Recovery Act	18,200
2010	23,450
2011 CR	23,450

Centers for independent living

2007	\$74,638
2008	73,334
2009	77,266
Recovery Act	87,500
2010	80,266
2011 CR	80,266

Services for older individuals who are blind

2007	\$32,895
2008	32,320
2009	34,151
Recovery Act	34,300
2010	34,151
2011 CR	34,151

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Independent living

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2012, the Administration requests \$103.7 million for a new Grants for Independent Living program and \$34.2 million for the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind (Older Blind) program. The Grants for Independent Living program would replace the Independent Living State Grants program and the Centers for Independent Living (CIL) program, so funds are not requested under either of these authorities. The request for the Grants for Independent Living program is same funding level as the combined 2011 CR level for the Independent Living State Grants and Centers for Independent Living. The request for the Older Blind program is the same as the 2011 CR level.

Grants for Independent Living

The Administration requests \$103.7 million for a new program, Grants for Independent Living, that would provide formula grants to States to support the provision of independent living services through centers that meet the requirements for centers for independent living under section 725 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (the Act). Title VII of the Act currently authorizes two programs with identical target populations and overlapping purposes, the Independent Living State Grants program, which provides formula grants to States, and the Centers for Independent Living program, which provides competitive grants to nonprofit centers for independent living. Annual program reports show that an estimated 60 percent of the formula funds awarded under the Independent Living State Grants program is used for the same purposes as the competitive funds for the CIL program – to provide independent living services, either directly or through grants and contracts with centers for independent living and other providers. The usual advantages of a competitive grant program (stronger performance and accountability focus) are muted under the current CIL program because the authorizing statute requires all centers funded by the end of fiscal year 1997 to receive noncompetitive funding as long as they continue to meet program and fiscal standards and assurances. In practice, this provision is also applied to centers established after 1997. As a result, all 356 centers in the CIL program are eligible to receive noncompetitive continuation funding indefinitely as long as they continue to meet the applicable standards and assurances. The proposed consolidation of the two programs would reduce program duplication, eliminate administrative burdens and inefficiencies at the Federal, State, and local levels, and encourage States to take a more active role in ensuring that effective service systems are available.

To determine the optimal use within each State of funds provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 for the CIL program, leading stakeholders such as the designated State units, Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs), and centers for independent living had to review the provisions of the approved State Plan for Independent Living and decide how the additional resources could be used to expand and improve the provision of independent living within each State, with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of unserved and underserved areas. The Administration believes the proposed consolidation of independent living funds into a single grant program would similarly encourage States, SILCs, centers for independent living, and consumers with disabilities to work together to determine the best use of the consolidated funds within their States. By awarding population-based grants to States, ensuring that SILCs have sufficient support, and requiring States to distribute subgrants

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Independent living

in a manner consistent with the State Plan for Independent Living, the proposed new formula grant program would make it easier for the Department and for consumers with disabilities to hold States and SILCs responsible for ensuring that independent living services are provided to all areas of the State through a Statewide network of centers for independent living.

Under current law, States for which State funding for the general operation of centers for independent living equals or exceeds Federal funding are already eligible to administer their own funds under the Centers for Independent Living program. Only two States, Massachusetts and Minnesota, have elected to exercise this option. However, annual report data from grantees indicates that as many as 21 States may be eligible to administer their own grant funds because State funding for CILs exceeds Federal funding. Centers for independent living in the two States that administer their own programs report higher percentages of consumers achieving outcomes under the performance measures for the CIL program compared to other States. The Administration hopes to achieve those above-average outcomes for a higher proportion of States by extending the State-administered model nationwide with the proposed Grants for Independent Living program.

Under this new program, State grant allocations would be determined by a population-based formula. The \$103.7 million request for this program would enable the Department to award grants to all States and Territories that would be equivalent to their combined allocations under the Independent Living State Grants and Centers for Independent Living programs in fiscal year 2011. States participating in the program would be required to match \$1 of non-Federal resources for every \$9 of Federal funds received under the Independent Living State Grants program in FY 2011. The Secretary would reserve no more than 1.55 percent of the funds appropriated under the Grants for Independent Living program in 2012 to provide grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to provide training and technical assistance to centers for independent living. The amount of this set-aside is approximately equal to the amount reserved for technical assistance and training under the existing Centers for Independent Living program. States would be required to set aside the lesser of \$300,000 or 5 percent of their allocations for the SILC. Under the existing Independent Living State Grants program, States have the discretion to provide as little or as much funding for SILC operations as they choose. The Administration believes that it is necessary to clarify the duties and responsibilities of the SILC and to ensure that all SILCs have adequate funding to perform them.

The States would be permitted to reserve a small percentage of the funds for the administration of the program, for activities such as administering competitive awards for subgrants to centers for independent living and oversight and monitoring of these grants. States could also use these funds to continue outreach, evaluation, and consumer satisfaction activities that were authorized under the Independent Living State Grants program.

States would be required to award all remaining funds as subgrants only to nonprofit entities that meet the standards and assurances for centers for independent living in section 725 of the Act. Under the existing Independent Living State Grants program, funds can be used to support the provision of independent living services through centers for independent living or through contracts with other entities. The Administration believes that the goal of maximizing the independence and full participation of individuals with disabilities in their communities is best served by providing these services through centers for independent living, rather than contracts

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Independent living

with other entities, because CILs are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, nonresidential, private nonprofit agencies that are designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities. For this reason, subgrants to entities, including for-profit corporations, that do not meet the requirements in section 725 of the Act would not be authorized under the new program. States would be required to distribute subgrants to centers for independent living according to an approved State Plan for Independent Living.

Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind

The Administration requests \$34.2 million for the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals who are Blind program for fiscal year 2012, the same level as the 2011 CR level. According to a 2008 report by the U.S. Census Bureau, 10.1 percent of individuals 65 and older (about 3.5 million people) have a vision-related disability. The occurrence of a sensory disability was more than six times greater among older adults than working-age people. Persons age 55 or older are projected to increase as a share of the population over the next decade and beyond. Independent living services for these individuals are predominately provided through contracts administered by State vocational rehabilitation agencies, not centers for independent living, and many of the needs of this target population are different from the population that would be served under the proposed Grants for Independent Living program. For these reasons, the Administration believes a sustained investment in this program separate from the Grants for Independent Living program is warranted. At the requested funding level, an estimated 16 States would receive the minimum award of \$225,000, and the Territories would continue to be funded at the minimum level.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Grants for Independent Living			
Number of Grantees	0	0	77
Minimum State award	0	0	\$1,172
Average State award	0	0	\$1,933
Minority outreach	0	0	\$1,037
Training and technical assistance	0	0	\$1,445
Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind:			
Number of Grantees	56	56	56
Minimum State award	\$225	\$225	\$225
Average State award	\$647	\$647	\$647
Minority outreach	\$342	\$342	\$342
Independent Living State Grants:			
Number of Grantees	77	77	0
Minimum State award	\$313	\$313	0
Average State award	\$444	\$444	0
Minority outreach	\$235	\$235	0

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Independent living

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Centers for Independent Living:			
Number of Grantees	358	358	0
Minimum State Allocation	\$859	\$859	0
Average State allocation	\$1,498	\$1,489	0
Minority outreach	\$445	\$837	0
Training and Technical Assistance	\$1,445	\$1,445	0
Peer review	\$13	\$10	0

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years, including funding provided under the Recovery Act, and those requested in FY 2012 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by the program.

The current performance measures of the Centers for Independent Living and the State Grants for Independent Living programs would continue to be used in FY 2012 as part of GPRA reporting for the proposed Grants for Independent Living program. The objectives and goals of the proposed program would not change substantially from their current form shown below.

Goal: To promote and support a philosophy of independent living (IL)—including a philosophy of consumer control, peer support, self-help, self-determination, equal access, and individual and system advocacy—in order to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities, and the integration and full inclusion of individuals with disabilities into the mainstream of American society.

Objective: *Through the provision of IL services (including the four IL core services), increase the percentage of consumers who report having access to services needed to improve their ability to live more independently and participate fully in their communities.*

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Independent living

Measure: The percentage of Independent Living Centers consumers who report having access to previously unavailable appropriate accommodations to receive health care services, as a result of direct services provided by an Independent Living Center (including referral to another service provider).

Year	Target	Actual
2007	66	66
2008	67	41
2009	69	58
2010	69	
2011	70	
2012	70	

Measure: The percentage of Independent Living Centers consumers who report having access to previously unavailable assistive technology which results in increased independence in at least one significant life area, as a result of direct services provided by an Independent Living Center (including referral to another service provider).

Year	Target	Actual
2007	70	75
2008	71	44
2009	73	62
2010	74	
2011	76	
2012	76	

Measure: The percentage of Independent Living Centers consumers who report having access to previously unavailable transportation, as a result of direct services provided by an Independent Living Center (including referral to another service provider).

Year	Target	Actual
2007	81	66
2008	83	18
2009	84	73
2010	86	
2011	87	
2012	87	

Additional information: For these measures, grantees in the Centers for Independent Living program are required under section 704 of the Rehabilitation Act to report annually detailed data on the services they provided and the resulting outcomes, including the percentage of their consumers who report—as result of services provided by a CIL (including referral to another service provider), DSU, or DSU grantee or contractor—having access to previously unavailable transportation, appropriate accommodations to receive health care services, and/or assistive technology resulting in increased independence in at least one significant life area. The denominator is determined by the grantee based on the number of consumers who have goals specified in their Independent Living Plans that require measurable progress on these

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Independent living

intermediate outcomes (access to transportation, health care services, and/or assistive technology) for their achievement. These are not the only outcomes of interest to CIL grantees or consumers, but RSA believes that a significant portion of CIL activities are directly related to these outcomes and that improved performance on these outcomes will result in increased independence for CIL consumers overall.

Data for 2009 indicate that targets were not met in any of the outcome areas reported under these measures. However, performance on all three measures showed progress compared to the previous year. RSA staff and the program's technical assistance grantees have conducted data quality training sessions in recent years to improve the validity of the data. RSA also implemented a series of data checks, which have resulted in further improvements in the accuracy of the data. RSA will examine whether to reset baselines for these measures using the more accurate data. Data for 2010 are expected in May 2011.

Measure: The percentage of Independent Living Centers' consumers who move out of institutions into a community-based setting through the provision of Independent Living services (including the four independent living core services).		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	55	56
2008	55	44
2009	56	45
2010	56	
2011	57	
2012	57	

Additional information: Many CILs believe that one of the most important functions of the CIL program is assisting people with disabilities with moving out of institutions and living independently. Consumers counted by this measure must have moved out of an institution or nursing home and now live in a community-based setting. The target for 2009 was not met. RSA staff and the program's technical assistance grantees have conducted data quality trainings in recent years to improve the validity of the data. RSA also implemented a series of data checks, which have resulted in further improvements in the accuracy of the annual reports. Data for 2010 are expected in May 2011.

Objective: *Increase access to community life for persons with disabilities through the provision of community services.*

The Department developed new measures in order to capture CIL efforts at the community level on key outcomes that correspond to the outcome measures for services and activities provided at the individual level. Grantees have found that measuring and reporting valid and reliable data on these outcomes at the community level is much more difficult. RSA is working to develop new measures that capture community-level activities and will include these new measures in the next version of the section 704 reporting instrument.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Independent living

Objective: *Through the provision of services (either directly or through contracts), increase the percentage of consumers receiving services funded through the Older Blind program who report having access to services needed to improve their ability to live more independently and participate fully in their communities.*

Measure: The percentage of Independent Living older blind consumers who have access to previously unavailable assistive technology aids and devices.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	50	94
2008	52	59
2009	54	68
2010	56	
2011	58	
2012	58	

Additional information: Data for 2009 significantly exceeded the target. Future targets for this program will be revised if closer examination indicates that 2009 performance level is based on valid and reliable data. Data for 2010 are expected by May 2011.

Measure: The percentage of Independent Living older blind consumers who report an improvement in daily living skills.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	55	53
2008	56	49
2009	57	68
2010	58	
2011	59	
2012	59	

Additional information: The actual data for 2009 exceed the target. Data for 2010 are expected by May 2011.

Efficiency Measures

The Department has established two efficiency measures for the CIL program: (1) the number of consumer service records closed with all goals met for every \$10,000 in net operating funds and (2) the number of consumer goals accomplished per \$10,000 in net operating funds. In fiscal year 2007, program staff began pilot testing these measures during site reviews of CIL grantees to see how grantees respond to the measures and how the data can be used to help monitor grantees. RSA commissioned a contractor to analyze the efficiency data. The results showed that CILs varied widely in their reported efficiency depending on the size, location, funding sources, intensity of services, and accuracy of records of each CIL. The Department is considering adjusting the measures to better account for the impact of these characteristics.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Protection and advocacy of individual rights (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title V, Section 509)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$18,101 ²	\$18,101	0

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) program supports a statewide system to protect the legal and human rights of individuals with disabilities who are ineligible for protection and advocacy (P&A) services provided under Part C of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, and the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Act, or who need P&A services that are beyond the scope of the Client Assistance Program. The purpose of this program is to provide assistance and information to eligible individuals with disabilities and conduct advocacy to ensure the protection of their rights under Federal law. States may use these funds to plan and carry out P&A programs for eligible individuals with disabilities and to develop outreach strategies to inform individuals with disabilities of their rights.

Funds must be set aside under this program for two activities before awarding grants to eligible States and outlying areas with the remaining appropriation. If the appropriation is equal to or exceeds \$5.5 million, the Secretary must first set aside between 1.8 percent and 2.2 percent of the amount appropriated for training and technical assistance to eligible systems established under this program. In addition, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (the Act) requires that in any year in which the total appropriation exceeds \$10.5 million, the Secretary must award \$50,000 to the eligible system established under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act to serve the American Indian consortium. The Secretary then distributes the remainder of the appropriation to the eligible systems within the States and outlying areas on a population basis after satisfying minimum allocations. The fiscal year 2010 allotments were based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2008. The fiscal year 2011 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates released in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 State distributions are based on the April 1, 2010 Census data released on December 21, 2010.

The Act also requires the Secretary to increase the minimum allotments for States and outlying areas by a percentage not greater than the percentage increase in the total amount appropriated for this program for the previous fiscal year. The Act establishes a minimum

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Protection and advocacy of individual rights

allotment of \$100,000 for States or one-third of 1 percent of funds remaining after the technical assistance set-aside and grant for the American Indian consortium, whichever is greater. The outlying areas receive a minimum allotment of \$50,000. The program is current-funded but States and outlying areas may carry over unobligated Federal funds for an additional year.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000)
2007	\$16,489
2008	16,201
2009	17,101
2010	18,101
2011 CR	18,101

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$18.101 million for the Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) program in fiscal year 2012, the same as the fiscal year 2011 CR level. Federal support for PAIR enables States to provide assistance and information to eligible individuals with disabilities and thereby ensure the protection of their rights under Federal law.

During FY 2009, PAIR programs reported representing 15,629 individuals and responding to 43,435 requests for information or referral. Of the cases handled by PAIR programs in that year, the greatest number of specified issues involved education (18 percent), government benefits/services (18 percent), and employment (12 percent).

In addition to providing representation to individuals, PAIR programs address systemic issues faced by persons with disabilities through a variety of methods, including negotiations with public and private entities and class action litigation.

In fiscal year 2009, 55 out of the 57 PAIR programs (96 percent) reported that these activities resulted in changes in policies and practices benefiting individuals with disabilities. This number represents an increase from fiscal year 2008, when 53 of the 57 PAIR programs (93 percent) reported systemic advocacy that resulted in change in policies and practices.

The following examples of case services provided in 2009 illustrate how PAIR programs assist individuals and bring about systemic change:

Disability Rights New Mexico (DRNM) represented a Native American boy with severe learning disabilities, who was attending a Pueblo-based middle school. He had a history of behavior problems and was suspended and placed at an alternative school. Another incident occurred and he was suspended from the alternative setting. At his manifestation determination hearing, the school determined his behavior was not connected to his disability, but to an Obsessive Defiant Disorder. The school wanted to place him in homebound instruction. A DRNM advocate participated in a hearing and was able to get the student back at the alternative school during his suspension. When DRNM began communication with the alternative education teacher, it

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Protection and advocacy of individual rights

became clear the administration was not following Individuals with Disabilities Education Act properly. DRNM advocated at a meeting in which a Behavioral Intervention Plan was developed for the student, and the principal allowed the student to return to the regular middle school early in 2009.

Colorado's protection and advocacy system represented two college students who were deaf and pursuing their bachelor's degrees and teaching certificates in Special Education. The public college determined that they would not recommend the students for licensure since they were deaf and could not perform all tasks necessary for a teacher in a classroom. The college did not believe that reasonable accommodations should be made. After filing a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, the parties attended a mediation session and the college agreed that it would provide reasonable accommodations and would recommend these students and all future students for teacher licensure as long as they passed the coursework and field work using reasonable accommodations.

South Dakota Advocacy Services was contacted by an employee who worked in a central warehouse hub of a farm retail company. The individual's primary duties at the warehouse were to assist in getting replacement orders from retail outlets of the company ready for shipment to the outlets, time sensitive work because of transportation deadlines. The individual has diabetes and a heart condition and takes medications for those conditions. One side effect of the medication regimen is the need for frequent bathroom breaks. The individual's immediate supervisor began to systematically harass and publicly ridicule the individual for frequent breaks and would not agree to consider breaks to be a reasonable accommodation based on the individual's disability. South Dakota Advocacy Services reviewed the individual's personnel file and engaged in correspondence with the company's attorney alleging prohibited workplace activities and discrimination. After a series of contacts, the individual reported a significant change in the supervisor's attitude, breaks as necessary were tolerated by the supervisor, no retaliation was experienced and the individual remains fully employed. This case led to a systemic change whereby the company recognized the need to reassess and redirect its policies regarding appropriately accommodating persons in the work place.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Information inquiries/referrals	43,400	43,400	43,400
Individuals provided case services	15,600	15,600	15,600

Note: Data for fiscal years 2010 through 2012 are projected from actual data collected for fiscal year 2009 in which PAIRs responded to 43,435 requests for information or referral and represented 15,629 individuals. Data for fiscal year 2010 will be available in April of 2011.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Protection and advocacy of individual rights

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2012 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: To provide assistance and information to individuals with disabilities eligible for the Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights program and conduct advocacy to ensure the protection of their rights under Federal law.

Objective: Identify problem areas requiring systemic change and engage in systemic activities to address those problems.

Measure: The percentage of PAIR programs that reported that their systemic advocacy resulted in a change in policy or practice.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	83	91
2008	83	93
2009	83	96
2010	85	
2011	93	
2012	93	

Additional information: Because PAIR programs cannot address all issues facing individuals with disabilities solely through individual advocacy, they seek to change public and private policies and practices that present barriers to the rights of individuals with disabilities, utilizing negotiations and class action litigation. Of the 57 PAIR programs, 52 (91 percent) reported success on this measure in fiscal year 2007, and 53 of the 57 (93 percent) PAIR programs reported success in fiscal year 2008. In fiscal year 2009, 55 of the 57 (96 percent) PAIR programs reported success on the measure, far exceeding the target established for 2009. The targets for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 have been raised to 93 percent based on the average of the last 3 years of data (fiscal years 2007 through 2009).

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Recreational programs

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 305)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$2,474 ²	0	-\$2,474

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The Administration is not proposing to authorize this program through appropriations language for FY 2012.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Recreational programs provide recreational and related activities to individuals with disabilities to aid in their employment, mobility, independence, socialization, and community integration. Programs are designed to promote the development of social skills that can help individuals with disabilities integrate into the community.

This program awards discretionary grants on a competitive basis to States, public agencies, and nonprofit private organizations, including institutions of higher education. The statute requires the Federal contribution for projects funded under this authority to decrease over the 3-year project period. Grantees are required to maintain services during the second and third years of the project at the level provided in the first year. The Federal share of the costs of the project is 100 percent for the first year, 75 percent for the second year, and 50 percent for the third. The applicant is required to include a description in the application of how the project will continue after Federal assistance ends.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

(\$000s)

2007	\$2,518
2008	2,474
2009	2,474
2010	2,474
2011 CR	2,474

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

No funds are requested for Recreational programs in fiscal year 2012. While the Administration strongly supports helping individuals with disabilities become full and active members in society,

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Recreational programs

this program has limited national impact. The Administration believes recreational programs would be more appropriately financed by State and local agencies and the private sector.

For example, the National Sports Center for the Disabled (NSCD), founded in 1970, and headquartered in Denver, Colorado, is one of the Nation's largest therapeutic recreational organizations. Its mission is to positively affect the lives of people with any physical or mental challenge through quality adaptive recreation programs in over 20 sports. In fiscal year 2009, the NSCD received 76 percent of its funds from private contributions and special fundraising events. The remaining 24 percent came from program fees (21 percent) and other sources (3 percent). During fiscal year 2009, the NSCD had three title sponsors – Sports Authority, Wells Fargo, and Winter Park Resort.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
New awards:			
Number	12	16	0
Average new award	\$101	\$112	0
Funding	\$1,216	\$1,799	0
Continuation awards:			
Number	16	10	0
Funding	\$1,233	\$600	0
Other:			
Minority outreach	\$25	\$25	0
Peer review of new award applications	<u>0</u> ¹	<u>50</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	\$2,474	\$2,474	0

¹ RSA receives hundreds of applications for this program. In order to reduce the amount of funds spent on peer review, RSA supports new grant competitions every 2 years and awards funds to grantees that were approved for funding but could not be supported with grant funds until the succeeding fiscal year. As a result there were no peer review costs in fiscal year 2010, because RSA funded 12 applications approved for funding, but not funded, from the competition conducted in fiscal year 2009.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Recreational programs

Goal: To provide individuals with disabilities recreational activities and related experience that can be expected to aid in their employment, mobility, socialization, independence and community integration.

Objective: To initiate recreational programs for individuals with disabilities that continue after Federal funding ceases.

Measure: The percentage of Vocational Rehabilitation-funded Recreational Programs in operation 1, 2, or 3 years after Federal funding ceased.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	79	79
2008	80	79
2009	80	83
2010	80	
2011	81	

Additional information: The primary purpose of this program is to initiate recreational programs that will continue on their own after Federal funding ends. Grantees are required to provide an increased level of support from non-Federal sources over their 3-year project period. RSA measures the success of this program through the percentage of projects in operation 1, 2, and 3 years after Federal funding ceases.

In fiscal year 2007, this program met its target: 79 percent of the 24 projects that received their last year of Federal support during 2004 through 2006 were still in operation and providing recreational services to individuals with disabilities. In fiscal year 2008, 79 percent of the 25 projects that received their last year of funding during 2005 through 2007 were still in operation – falling short of the target by 1 percent. In fiscal year 2009, 83 percent of the 26 projects that received their last year of Federal support during 2006 through 2008 were still in operation and providing recreational services – exceeding the target of 80 percent. A fiscal year 2012 performance target has not been set for this measure because the Administration is proposing to eliminate this program.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$109,241 ²	\$110,485	+1,244

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The mission of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) is to generate knowledge and promote its effective use to improve the abilities of people with disabilities to perform activities of their choice in the community, and also to expand society's capacity to provide full opportunities and accommodations for its citizens with disabilities. NIDRR conducts comprehensive and coordinated programs of research and related activities to maximize the full inclusion, social integration, employment, and independent living of individuals with disabilities of all ages. The purposes of NIDRR are to:

- Promote, coordinate, and provide for research, demonstration and training, and related activities with respect to individuals with disabilities;
- Widely disseminate findings, conclusions, and recommendations resulting from its activities; and
- Provide leadership in advancing the quality of life of individuals with disabilities.

NIDRR's research is conducted through a network of individual research projects and centers of excellence located throughout the Nation. Most funding is awarded through competitive grants, and most of the funds are awarded to universities or providers of rehabilitation or related services.

As required by the Rehabilitation Act in §202(h), NIDRR is working to update its Long-Range plan and is currently operating under a plan published February 15, 2006 entitled *Long-Range Plan for Fiscal Years 2005—2009*. This plan outlines three long-term performance goals and its strategies for achieving these goals. These goals are:

- Goal 1: Advancing knowledge through capacity building,
- Goal 2: Advancing knowledge through research and related activities, and

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

- Goal 3: Advancing knowledge through translation and dissemination.

NIDRR funding supports a portfolio of research and development, capacity building, and knowledge translation projects that are aligned with these long-term performance goals.

Following is a description of the primary areas for which NIDRR makes awards:

Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs). RRTCs receive funding to conduct coordinated and advanced programs of research, training, and information dissemination in problem areas that are specified by NIDRR. More specifically, RRTCs conduct research to improve rehabilitation methodologies and service delivery systems, alleviate or stabilize disabling conditions, and promote maximum social and economic independence for persons with disabilities; provide training, including graduate, pre-service, and in-service training, to help rehabilitation personnel provide more effective rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities; and serve as centers of excellence in rehabilitation research for providers and for individuals with disabilities and their representatives. Typically, awards are for 5 years. However, NIDRR also may award grants for less than 5 years to support new or innovative research.

Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs). The RERCs conduct research on issues dealing with rehabilitation technology, including rehabilitation engineering and assistive technology devices and services. RERC activities include developing and disseminating innovative methods of applying advanced technology, scientific achievements, and psychological and social knowledge to rehabilitation issues such as the removal of environmental barriers; developing and disseminating technology designed to lessen the effects of sensory loss, mobility impairment, chronic pain, and communication difficulties; scientific research to assist in meeting the employment and independent living needs of individuals with severe disabilities; and stimulating the production and distribution of equipment in the private sector, as well as clinical evaluations of equipment. Each RERC must provide training opportunities to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to become researchers and practitioners in the field of rehabilitation technology. Awards are for 5 years, except that grants to new recipients or to support new or innovative research may be made for less than 5 years.

Model Systems. NIDRR funds model systems projects in three areas: spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, and burn injury. Model systems funding supports 5-year grants to establish innovative projects for the delivery, demonstration, and evaluation of comprehensive medical, vocational, and other rehabilitation services to meet the wide range of needs of individuals in these areas. Grantees in each of the three areas contribute to a national database that is supported by NIDRR funding. These model systems programs have become platforms for conducting multi-site research, including randomized controlled trials to determine the efficacy of interventions.

- *Model Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems.* The Model Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) program funds research to meet the wide range of needs of individuals with spinal cord injuries. (See <http://www.ncddr.org/rpp/hf/hfdw/mscis/>.) The projects also disseminate information to individuals with SCI and others.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

- *Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems.* The Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Model Systems projects are research and demonstration grants designed to advance the understanding of TBI and its consequences and improve rehabilitation outcomes. Currently, the NIDRR TBI model systems is the largest nonmilitary TBI service delivery/research entity participating in various intergovernmental efforts to improve treatment and outcomes for returning veterans. (See <http://www.tbindsc.org>.)
- *Burn Model Systems.* The Burn Model Systems (BMS) projects are research and demonstration grants designed to establish, demonstrate, and evaluate a model system of care for burn injury survivors. The goal of the projects is to reduce disability by improving treatment and rehabilitation. (See <http://mama.uchsc.edu/pub/NIDRR/index.html>.)

Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs). Field-Initiated Projects supplement NIDRR's directed research and address a wide range of topics identified by investigators, including research, demonstrations, development, and knowledge translation. These projects allow NIDRR to address emerging developments in the field beyond the scope of announced priorities. Most of these awards are made for 3 years.

Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRPs). Grantees under this program focus on discrete research topics identified by NIDRR and address problems encountered by people with disabilities through a variety of methods that may include research, demonstrations, training, dissemination, utilization, technical assistance, or combinations of these activities.

Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTAC). The DBTAC grants support a network of 10 regional centers that provide detailed technical assistance, disseminate information, and provide training related to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and promote awareness of the ADA. Typically, these awards are for 5 years.

Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training (ARRT). The ARRT program supports grants to institutions to provide advanced postdoctoral training in areas that are directly related to NIDRR's research portfolio, such as medical rehabilitation, engineering, technology, community integration, and employment. Grants are made to institutions to recruit qualified persons with doctoral or similar advanced degrees and prepare them to conduct independent research in areas related to disability and rehabilitation. These training programs must operate in interdisciplinary environments and provide training in rigorous scientific methods.

Small Business Innovation Research projects (SBIR). SBIR awards support the development of new rehabilitation technologies that are useful to persons with disabilities by inviting the participation of small business firms with strong research capabilities in science, engineering, or educational technology. This 2-phase program takes a product from development to market readiness. During Phase I, firms conduct feasibility studies to evaluate the scientific and technical merit of an idea. During Phase II, they expand on the results and pursue further development. In order to be eligible, small businesses must be American-owned and independently operated and be for-profit with no more than 500 employees. The principal researcher must be employed by the business.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

Switzer Research Fellowships. Switzer research fellows receive 1-year fellowships to carry out discrete research activities that are related to NIDRR's research priorities or to pursue studies in areas of importance to the rehabilitation community.

Outreach to Minority Institutions. The Rehabilitation Act (§21) requires that 1 percent of funds appropriated for programs authorized under certain titles be reserved for awards to minority entities and Indian tribes, or to provide outreach and assistance to minority entities and Indian tribes.

Other Activities: NIDRR funding also supports a variety of other activities, including knowledge translation; collaborative projects with other agencies; development and maintenance of grantee reporting systems; program review; and reporting, evaluation, long-range planning, and the *Interagency Committee on Disability Research* (ICDR). The primary purpose of the ICDR is to promote cooperation across various Federal agencies in the development and execution of disability and rehabilitation research activities. (See <http://www.icdr.us/>.)

NIDRR funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

(\$000s)

2007	\$106,705
2008	105,741
2009	107,741
2010	109,241
2011 CR	109,241

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$110.48 million in fiscal year 2012 for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), an increase of \$1.24 million over the fiscal year 2011 CR level. The request would enable NIDRR to cover the costs of grants and contracts that began in previous fiscal years and provide \$18.8 million for new grant activities.

Approximately half of the funds for new awards would be used in two of NIDRR's model systems programs:

- The Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems Centers Program (TBIMS) was first funded in 1987, and currently includes 16 centers nationwide that provide comprehensive systems of care to individuals who sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI). NIDRR proposes to use \$7.5 million in fiscal year 2012 for 14 new 5-year awards.
- The Burn Model System (BMS) Centers provide leadership in rehabilitation as a key component of exemplary burn care and work to advance the research base on rehabilitation services for burn survivors. In fiscal year 2012, NIDRR plans to make four new 5-year BMS Centers with \$1.5 million, and one new 5-year award for \$350,000 to maintain the BMS longitudinal database.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

NIDRR also proposes to establish new Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERC) in 2012. NIDRR expects to make three 5-year awards at \$950,000 per year. Possible topics include:

- Workplace Accommodation: This RERC would research, develop, and evaluate innovative technologies, devices, and systems to increase employment maintenance for people with disabilities and enhance the productivity of people with disabilities in the workplace.
- Robotics: This RERC would research, develop, and evaluate human-scale robots and telemanipulation (the integration of human-control with a manipulator) systems that will address the unique needs of people with disabilities.
- Recreation Technology and Exercise Physiology Benefiting Individuals with Disabilities: This RERC would research, develop, and evaluate innovative technologies and strategies that will enhance recreational opportunities for people with disabilities and develop methods to enhance the physical performance and endurance of people with disabilities.
- Technologies for Individuals with Mobility Impairments: This RERC would research, develop, and evaluate innovative technologies and approaches that will improve the treatment, rehabilitation, employment, and integration into society of persons with mobility impairments. The development of cutting-edge devices and the application of existing technologies such as integrated control systems, robotics, and neuroprosthetics may help individuals with mobility impairments perform activities of daily living, work, and participate in their communities. Mobility impairments include, but are not limited to: Neuromuscular disease, paralysis, hemiplegia, and cerebral palsy.

Fiscal year 2012 funds also would be used to expand NIDRR's program of research on employment and vocational rehabilitation (VR). For example, NIDRR plans to award a grant to conduct a systematic review of existing empirical research on VR for the purpose of generating usable knowledge about how State VR programs can effectively and efficiently improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities such as individuals with developmental and psychiatric disabilities. This will complement a number of projects on employment and VR initiated in fiscal year 2010, including an RRTC focused on employment issues and one new DRRP. Possible topics for 2011 research activities include: VR services for aging workers with disabilities; the return on investment in the VR program; and cultural competence in the delivery of VR services.

As part of the plan to expand the role of NIDRR in VR and employment research, NIDRR will also play an increased role in the conduct of demonstration projects, in collaboration with the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), and will carry out rigorous evaluations of demonstration projects and of the policies, practices, and strategies used by State VR agencies and other service providers. In fiscal year 2012, approximately \$500,000 would be available for such activities.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

	Funding (\$000s)			Number of Awards		
	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
<i>Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers</i>						
Continuations	\$16,098	\$21,680	21,738	21	25	26
New awards	<u>6,100</u>	<u>700</u>	<u>650</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Subtotal	22,198	23,380	22,388	28	26	27
<i>Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers</i>						
Continuations	14,583 ¹	13,091	13,215	17	16	14
New awards	<u>1,900</u>	<u>1,900</u>	<u>2,850</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
Subtotal	16,483	14,991	16,065	19	18	17
<i>Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems</i>						
Continuations	8,899	0	9,075	17	0	17
New awards	<u>0</u>	<u>9,075</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	8,899	9,075	9,075	17	17	17
<i>Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems</i>						
Continuations	9,029	8,565	2,334	19	18	3
New awards	<u>0</u>	<u>625</u>	<u>7,500</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>14</u>
Subtotal	9,029	9,190	9,834	19	19	17
<i>Burn Model Systems</i>						
Continuations	1,750	1,750	0	5	5	0
New	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,850</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>
Subtotal	1,750	1,750	1,850	5	5	5
<i>Field Initiated Projects</i>						
Continuations	7,832	7,958	8,000	43	45	44
New awards	<u>5,733</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>2,800</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>14</u>
Subtotal	13,565	11,958	12,000	66	65	58

¹ The FY 2010 amount includes \$1,286 thousand for FY 2011 continuation costs.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

	Funding (\$000s)			Number of Awards		
	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
<i>Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects</i>						
Continuations	\$5,999	\$5,420	\$8,099	12	10	15
New awards	<u>1,050</u>	<u>2,100</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	7,049	7,520	8,099	14	16	15
<i>Advanced Rehabilitation Research and Training</i>						
Continuations	1,799	2,236	2,391	12	15	16
New awards	<u>592</u>	<u>600</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
Subtotal	2,391	2,836	2,691	16	19	18
<i>Minority Outreach</i>						
Continuations	1,094	1,119	1,105	3	3	3
New	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	1,094	1,119	1,105	3	3	3
<i>Small Business Innovation Research</i>						
Continuations	1,270	1,250	1,270	5	5	5
New	<u>2,375</u>	<u>2,375</u>	<u>2,375</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>
Subtotal	3,645	3,625	3,625	25	25	25
<i>Switzer Research Fellowships</i>						
Continuations	0	0	0	0	0	0
New	<u>503</u>	<u>505</u>	<u>505</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>
Subtotal	503	505	505	7	7	7
<i>Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers</i>						
Continuations	11,867	0	13,155	11	0	11
New	<u>1,000</u>	<u>13,155</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	12,867	13,155	13,155	0	11	11
<i>Knowledge Translation</i>						
Continuations	2,100	2,050	3,650	4	3	5
New awards	<u>1,050</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	3,150	3,550	3,650	6	5	5
Subtotal, grants	102,623	101,654	102,862	236	236	225

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

	Funding (\$000s)			Number of Awards		
	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Other Activities (Contracts)	\$5,718	\$6,332	\$6,398			
VR Program Evaluation Activities	0	500	500			
Peer review of new grant applications	760	615	500			
Other Support	<u>140</u>	<u>140</u>	<u>225</u>			
Subtotal	6,618	7,587	7,623			
Total, NIDRR	109,241	109,241	110,485			
Total, continuation awards	80,585	65,119	84,032	169	145	159
Total, new grant awards	20,303	36,535	18,830	67	91	66

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2012 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: To conduct high-quality research and related activities that lead to high-quality products.

Objective: *Advance knowledge through capacity building: Increase capacity to conduct and use high-quality and relevant disability and rehabilitation research and related activities designed to guide decision-making, change practice, and improve the lives of individuals with disabilities.*

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

Measure: The percentage of NIDRR-supported fellows, post-doctoral trainees, and doctoral students who publish results of NIDRR-sponsored research in refereed journals.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007		17
2008		12
2009		11
2010	TBD	
2011	TBD	
2012	TBD	

Additional information: For this measure, refereed journals are those journals that are recognized by the Thompson Institute for Scientific Information. See: <http://www.thompsonscientific.com/cgi-bin/jrnlst/jloptions.cgi?PC=master>. Due to the large differences among the first 3 years of data, NIDRR intends to collect at least 1 more year of data before establishing targets for this measure. A single author is counted only once if he or she produces multiple peer-reviewed publications, and fellows or graduate students who co-authored a publication are counted individually for their contributions to one publication. In 2009, there were a total of 670 currently supported NIDRR fellows, post-doctoral trainees and doctoral students. Seventy-six or 11.3 percent of the 670 fellows, post-doctoral trainees, and doctoral students produced publications that appeared in refereed journals. This statistic does not include publications produced by the 2009 students that were published in 2010 or later. This measure only includes NIDRR research grantees funded under NIDRR's Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTC's), Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERC's), Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training program (ARRT), Model Systems (MS), Disability Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP's) and Field Initiated Projects (FIP's). In 2009, grants in these areas accounted for approximately 68 percent of NIDRR's total appropriation. Data for fiscal year 2010 will be available in December 2011.

Objective: *Advance knowledge through research and related activities: Generate scientific-based knowledge, technologies, and applications to inform policy, change practice, and improve outcomes.*

Measure: The number of accomplishments (e.g., new or improved tools, methods, discoveries, standards, interventions, programs, or devices) developed or tested with NIDRR funding that have been judged by expert panels to be of high quality and to advance the field.

Additional information: NIDRR has been reviewing one-third of its grant portfolio each year since fiscal year 2005. Reviewers who are experts in disabilities research are asked to rate the accomplishments reported by grantees. In fiscal year 2007, baseline data were reported that indicated that 49 percent of the accomplishments reviewed by the panel were judged to be of high quality and to advance the field. However, there were concerns about the validity and reliability of the data generated by these reviews. NIDRR is currently negotiating a contract with the National Academy of Science that will be awarded to analyze and evaluate their data. The National Academy of Science will conduct a review of the final outcomes of NIDRR grants to assess the quality of products produced and determine the extent to which the outputs of these projects generate new knowledge for intended audiences. This evaluation will provide a new

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

source of data for this measure. (See discussion under Other Performance Information below.) We expect that the data from the fiscal years 2005 to 2007 reviews will not be comparable with data produced by the new peer review mechanism. The Department may need to change the language of the measure or the measure itself. NIDRR will have fiscal year 2009 data in December 2011.

Measure: Percentage of NIDRR-funded grant applications that receive an average peer review score of 85 or higher.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	90	96
2008	99	84
2009	96	94
2010	96	98
2011	96	
2102	96	

Additional information: This measure assesses the extent to which NIDRR-funded grant applications are judged by expert review panels to be of high quality. In fiscal year 2009, 94 percent of new awards received ratings of 85 or higher, which is just below the target. In fiscal year 2010, 98.5 percent of the 67 new awards received average peer review ratings of 85 or higher. Data for the measure include all grant awards made within a given fiscal year. Fiscal year 2011 data will be available in December 2011.

Measure: Percentage of new grants that assess the effectiveness of interventions, programs, and devices using rigorous methods.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	65	59
2008	49	63
2009	35	46
2010	60	
2011	56	
2012	61	

Additional information: This measure provides information on the proportion of NIDRR grantees that are engaged in experimental, quasi-experimental, or single subject research to determine whether interventions, programs, and devices are effective. The percentage of NIDRR grants that include tightly controlled research methods, such as true experimental, quasi-experimental, or single-subject methodologies, began high and then declined over a period of years from 65 percent in fiscal year 2002 to 35 percent in fiscal year 2006. However, this trend appears to have changed. In fiscal year 2007, the percentage was 59 percent and in 2008 was 63 percent. In 2009, 46.3 percent of all newly funded grantees reported that projects supported by the grant used true experimental, quasi-experimental or single subject designs. The variation across years is affected by the mix of grants funded in a particular funding cycle. Data for fiscal year 2010 will be available in December 2011.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

Objective: Advance knowledge through translation and dissemination: Promote the effective use of scientific-based knowledge, technologies, and applications to inform policy, improve practice, and enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities.

Measure: The number of new or improved NIDRR-funded assistive and universally designed technologies, products, and devices transferred to industry for potential commercialization.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007		26
2008	27	23
2009	24	30
2010	27	15
2011	15	
2012	28	

Additional information: In FY 2010, NIDRR's Annual Performance Report asked grantees implementing development projects to identify: "What stage of the development process are you in during this reporting period? Those selecting choice "(f) commercialization" are included in this measure.

The target for 2011 was reduced based upon 2010 actual data. In 2010, NIDRR grantees reported 149 development projects, of which 15 were reported as technology products and devices that were transferred to industry. We expect that that this number will remain relatively small because of the length of time it takes to develop new technologies.

Development projects funded by NIDRR through three funding mechanisms are included in this measure. These include Small Business Innovative Research Phase II (SBIRs), Rehabilitation Engineering and Research Centers (RERCs), and Field Initiated Programs (FIPs). Data for fiscal year 2011 will be available in December 2011.

Measure: The average number of publications per award based on NIDRR-funded research and development activities in refereed journals.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	1	1.8
2008	3	1.3
2009	3	1.4
2010	3	
2011	1.4	
2012	1.4	

Additional information: For this measure, refereed journals are those journals that are recognized by the Thompson Institute for Scientific Information journal selection process (<http://www.thompsonscientific.com/cgi-bin/jrnlst/jloptions.cgi?PC=master>). The methodology for determining performance under this measure was changed in 2007 to include only NIDRR

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

projects that are expected to produce publications as part of their specified tasks. This measure is now limited to NIDRR research grantees funded under the RRTCs, RERCs, ARRTs, MS, DRRPs, and FIPs programs. In addition, the methodology was changed to ensure that publications related to a grant were counted only once, regardless of the number of authors under the grant that participated in the publication. In FY 2009-10, 352 NIDRR grantees published an average of 1.4 publications per grant in referred journals. This rate was up slightly from the previous year. The 2011 target was increased slightly based upon actual data. Fiscal year 2010 data for this measure will be available by December 2011.

Objective: *Enhance the efficiency of the NIDRR grant award process.*

Efficiency Measures

Measure: The percentage of grant competitions for a given fiscal year that are announced by the beginning of that fiscal year (October 1).		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	50	69
2008	90	75
2009	70	21
2010	75	0
2011	77	
2012	77	

Measure: The percentage of grant awards issued within 6 months of the competition closing date.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007	90	100
2008	90	90
2009	80	84
2010	85	94
2011	85	
2012	85	

Additional information: NIDRR has established efficiency measures that assess its performance in announcing grant competitions on a regular schedule and awarding grants in a timely manner. A regular announcement schedule will allow potential applicants to better schedule their workload. NIDRR's goal is to announce all grant competitions for each fiscal year by the beginning of the fiscal year (October 1) and to notify applicants whether they have received an award within 6 months of application closing dates. However, there are numerous factors and levels of review that can affect the schedule, not all of which are under the NIDRR's control. As shown, in fiscal year 2010 NIDRR did not have any competitions announced by October 1. Fiscal year 2011 data for these measures will be available in October 2011.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

Other Performance Information

NIDRR has contracted with the National Academy of Science (NAS) to study the process NIDRR uses to establish priorities, conduct peer reviews of applications, and manage NIDRR grants. NAS is reviewing the final outcomes of NIDRR grants to evaluate the quality of products produced and determine the extent to which the outputs of these projects generate new knowledge for intended audiences. This comprehensive evaluation will take place over a period of 24 months with an option to extend the contract to review two additional cycles of NIDRR's priority development, grant-making, and product evaluations.

The study consists of two components, a process study and a summative review. As part of the process study, NAS will conduct onsite interviews with NIDRR staff and review existing programmatic guidance. It will also conduct phone interviews with the principal investigators for a subset of the grants in their final year. The findings from the process reviews will be presented in an evaluation report.

During the summative review, NAS will develop a sampling procedure for selecting approximately 30 grantees to be reviewed each year. The review will cover all products produced by these grantees. Because grantees have multiple projects and each project will report on its two most important outcomes, this will extend the scope of the review to many more products. For example, in fiscal year 2007, NIDRR funded 272 grantees that are conducting a total of 1,624 projects or an average of 6 projects per grantee. As such, the sample of 30 grantees could include approximately 180 projects. Each of these projects will be presenting up to two products to be reviewed during the summative review process by a summative review panel consisting of at least five experts.

The Department plans to use the results of this study to improve the priority setting and grant making process at NIDRR. The study will also provide data that can be used to assess the performance of grantees. This information also will be used to develop a new ongoing review process and to supply data for use with the Government Performance and Results Act measures.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Access through cloud computing

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
0	\$10,000	+\$10,000

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Access through Cloud Computing program will support research and development to provide on-demand accommodations for individuals with disabilities when they use technology. The goal of the project is to reduce barriers to the use of technology by giving users access any time, any place to needed accommodations that are stored remotely. Such accommodation has the potential to greatly expand the freedom of individuals with disabilities, who would no longer be tied to specific computers or IT devices with accessible software, and to expand their independence by reducing their need for support from others.

With cloud computing, data and applications are stored through an Internet infrastructure that can be accessed from any location, as opposed to being stored on a single computer or local server. Users can access the information from multiple locations. Thus, for example, a student using a computer at home, at school, or at the library could, upon identification, have specific accommodations (e.g., text to speech or large print) delivered automatically. The process would be similar to technologies used with automatic teller machines (ATMs), where users can set preferences such as preferred language and font size, when using any ATM on the network, and can automatically be served using the pre-set preferences. For users, the process is seamless, with users accessing Web-based tools or applications as if they were installed locally on their own technology devices.

The implications of cloud computing for maximizing participation and productivity of individuals with disabilities are many. For example, cloud computing could allow:

- students with disabilities to “carry” their own accommodations with them into any classroom or testing situation, on any platform, at home, at the library, or at school;
- an employee with a disability to bring accommodations to any computer application at any work location, and to take accommodations from job to job;
- patients with disabilities to communicate with health care providers and access electronic health records using interfaces that work for them, no matter which system is in use;

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Access through cloud computing

- people with disabilities to have access to online wizards that suggest new “real world” accommodations based on user input, creating a free marketplace for assistive technologies and devices; and
- educators and employers to have access to a vibrant marketplace of applications developers.

The program would be administered by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), which is authorized to promote, coordinate, and provide for research, demonstration projects and training, and related activities, with respect to individuals with disabilities. NIDRR is authorized to make competitive grants and award contracts that support activities to maximize the full inclusion and integration into society, employment, independent living, family support, and economic and social self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities.

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$10 million in fiscal year 2012 to support a new cloud computing initiative that uses the Internet infrastructure to improve technology access through the development, implementation, and delivery of mechanisms that will provide on-demand accessibility for everyone who faces technology accessibility barriers due to disability.

Specifically, the goals of the new cloud computing initiative are:

- to help develop and support delivery of on-demand accessibility features and services (anytime anywhere for any Internet-technology device).
- to establish standards so a system of shared components and services to reduce cost, increase interoperability, and foster innovation is developed and implemented.
- to improve the accessibility of the Internet and technology for individuals who need accommodations because of their disability.
- to put the U.S. on a path to support global universal on-demand access (Global Public Inclusive Infrastructure or GPII) through the principles of the National Public Inclusive Infrastructure (NPPI or www.npii.org.)

This new cloud computing initiative would be administered by NIDRR in consultation with the National Science Foundation, the Access Board, the Office of Science and Technology Policy, and other White House offices. NIDRR has contributed to the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) for many years. The W3C sets the standards that determine the behavior of Web browsers and servers and is made up by representatives of many companies and countries, and owned by no single company or group. The mission of the W3C is to develop protocols and guidelines that ensure the continued growth and development of the Web. Accessibility is a key feature of these protocols and guidelines. WAI develops initiatives, guidelines, and resources to ensure Web accessibility for individuals with disabilities

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Helen Keller National Center

(Helen Keller National Center Act)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$9,181 ²	\$9,181	0

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNC) was created by Congress in 1969, and operates under the auspices of Helen Keller Services for the Blind, Inc. The Center provides services on a national basis to adults who are deaf-blind, their families, and service providers through two component programs: a national headquarters center located just outside New York City, in Sands Point, New York, with a residential training and rehabilitation facility where deaf-blind individuals receive intensive specialized services; and a network of 10 regional field offices that provide referral, counseling, and transition assistance to deaf-blind individuals and technical assistance to service providers.

The purpose of the program at the national headquarters center is to provide direct services for individuals with deaf-blindness in order to enhance their potential for employment and to live independently in their home communities. The program strives to provide clients with enhanced mobility, improved means of communication, constructive participation in the home and community, increased employability, and other services and training pertinent to their personal development. The headquarters program also offers training and consultation to other programs serving individuals who are deaf-blind through a technical assistance center and a national training team. The national training team provides training nationwide on a request basis, with the requesting agency covering the travel costs for the team. The national training team also coordinates onsite conferences and workshops across the country to train professionals working with individuals who are deaf-blind.

The Center employs 11 regional representatives to serve individuals who are deaf-blind. These representatives provide a variety of services, including training for State and local service agency staff, general technical assistance, program assessment, community advocacy, and help in developing individualized service plans for deaf-blind clients of State vocational rehabilitation counselors, mental health workers, and special education programs. In addition, the regional staff provides counseling, information, and referral services for individuals who are deaf-blind and their families to assist them to live and work independently. The regional

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Helen Keller National Center

representatives also assist clients who have received training at headquarters with making the transition back to their home community.

HKNC also operates a number of special projects related to deaf-blindness. These include a service project for individuals who are elderly and deaf-blind and a national parent and family services project. In addition, the Center operates an internship program for undergraduate and graduate students in the field of deaf-blindness. These interns are financially supported by their sponsoring institutions or colleges during their stay and are expected to initiate and complete at least one project while at HKNC.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

	(\$000s)
2007	\$8,511
2008	8,362
2009	8,362
2010	9,181
2011 CR	9,181

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration's request for the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) is \$9.181 million, which would maintain funding at the fiscal year 2011 CR level. The request is sufficient to support a range of educational, independent living, and training programs that expand independent living and employment opportunities for individuals who are deaf-blind.

The Federal appropriation for HKNC represented about 65.2 percent of HKNC's total budget in fiscal year 2009, the most recent year for which this information is available. Most of the Center's total budget supports operations and programs associated with serving clients in the headquarters program. In fiscal year 2009, the Center served 74 adult clients at headquarters, 21 fewer than its target of 95. HKNC also served 22 short-term clients.

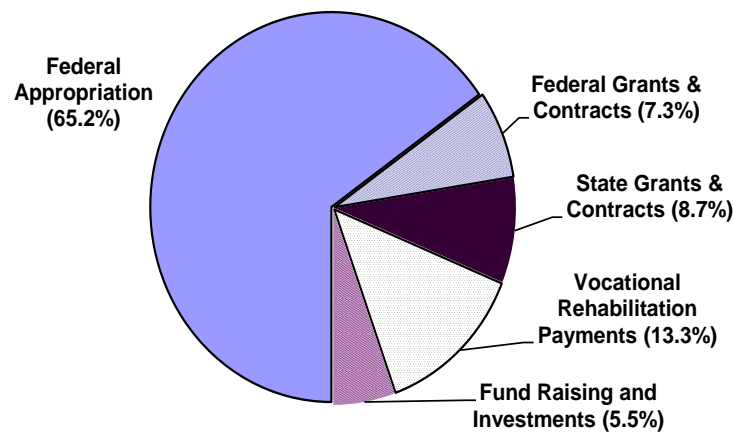
Other Sources of Funding: In addition to funds provided through the appropriation, the Center receives funding from a variety of State, private, and other Federal sources. For example, HKNC received \$760,000 in fiscal year 2009 through a grant from the Department's Office of Special Education Programs to provide technical assistance to State and local educational agencies. In recent years, the Center has also received a greater number of non-Federal grants. This includes a 5-year grant from the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities for \$1.1 million per year to operate housing and provide supported employment services for individuals who are deaf-blind with intellectual disabilities. These individuals were former participants in HKNC's training program. HKNC also has a contract with the New York State Commission for Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVH) to operate a Community Services Program (CSP) which provides rehabilitation teaching, orientation and mobility, case work, and job placement to deaf-blind individuals in the New York Metropolitan area who do not require the comprehensive services offered at the headquarters training program.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Helen Keller National Center

In fiscal year 2009, HKNC also actively expanded its efforts to raise funds from private sources, including charitable foundations. The Center has targeted fund raising efforts toward facilities improvement and special initiatives related to training and distance learning. The following chart shows the sources and percentages of the Center's fiscal year 2009 total operating budget of approximately \$12.84 million.

FY 2009 Operating Budget (\$12.84 million)



In fiscal year 2012, HKNC would use an estimated 67 percent of the amount requested, or \$6.15 million, to support client training and consumer support activities, the residence, maintenance and plant operations, and administrative functions at the Center's headquarters facility. The Center would use these funds to support 11 direct services departments: audiology; case management; communications; independent living; low vision; medical; orientation and mobility; vocational services; adaptive technology; clinical social work services; and staff functions such as payroll and benefits. At the request level, the Center estimates that it would serve approximately 73 adult clients with deaf-blindness at its headquarters and provide short-term training for approximately 12 high school students, 11 senior citizens, and 3 individuals who need training in the use of technology or other targeted skills.

HKNC would devote an estimated 33 percent of the amount requested, or \$3.03 million, to its field services and community education programs, including the activities of HKNC's 10 regional centers and its national training team for other service providers. These programs help State agencies and other programs to serve or acquire the capacity to serve individuals who are deaf-blind through training, community education, and technical assistance.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Helen Keller National Center

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
Number of individuals served:			
At headquarters:			
Adult training program clients	72	73	73
Specialized training services:			
Transition for high school students	12	12	12
Senior citizens	12	11	11
Targeted skills training	2	2	2
Through regional representatives: ¹			
Consumers	1,478	1,687	1,687
Families	441	473	473
Agencies/organizations	881	916	916
HKNC FTE staff	119	120	120

Note: Impact data are provided according to fiscal year, not HKNC's program year of July to June. The estimates for the number of individuals served in fiscal years 2011 and 2012 and full-time equivalent (FTE) figures are based on historical trend data, which may or may not be consistent with data for fiscal year 2010.

¹ Individuals served by the regional representatives include individuals attending workshops or conferences in which HKNC participates, who receive materials from the Center, or who receive technical assistance, referral services, or counseling from regional staff. The regional offices began using a new data collection system in fiscal year 2007 that resulted in lower, but potentially more accurate output data.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2012 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: Individuals who are deaf-blind will become independent and function as full and productive members of their local community.

Objective: *Individuals who are deaf-blind receive the specialized services and training they need to become as independent and self-sufficient as possible.*

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Helen Keller National Center

Measure: The percentage of training goals set and achieved by adult consumers, of adult consumers seeking employment who are placed in employment, and of adult consumers seeking to maintain their ability to live independently or move to less restrictive settings who achieve their goals.

Year	Target				Actual			
	# of Adult Consumers	% of Training goals met	% in Less Restrictive Settings	% Placed in Employment	# of Adult Consumers	% of Training goals met	% in Less Restrictive Settings	% Placed in Employment
2007	95	90	75	45	78	91	91	49
2008	95	90	75	45	84	88	83	48
2009	95	90	75	45	74	90	75	47
2010	95	90	75	45	72	92	93	43
2011	90	90	75	45				
2012	90	90	75	45				

Additional information: The number of adult clients attending the HKNC rehabilitation training center in fiscal year 2010 (72) decreased slightly from the prior year and was substantially below the target of 95. HKNC points out that the number of consumers served may fluctuate from year to year due to factors beyond the control of the Center, such as changes in State vocational rehabilitation program funding or policy. HKNC also suspended the Person Centered Approach to Habilitation and Training (PATH) program in 2008 for financial reasons, which may have reduced the number of individuals coming to the Center. The Center is considering reinstituting this program in fiscal year 2012 if sustainable funding is available. We anticipate that fiscal year 2011 data for these measures will be available in January 2012.

In addition to its traditional adult consumers, HKNC also provided short-term training for 12 high school students, 12 senior citizens, and 2 individuals seeking assessment or training in skill acquisition in specific activities, such as independent living, adaptive technology or work experience. The high school students participate in career exploration, college preparation, and other services offered by the Center and return to high school after their training. The high school students and senior citizens receiving short-term training are not included in the counts of adult consumers, consumers placed in employment or less restrictive settings, or consumers who meet their individualized training goals. Adult clients who participate in short-term targeted skills training are included the measure on training goals set and achieved, but not included in count of adult consumers or the measures of consumers placed in employment or less restrictive settings.

The Center evaluates the progress of clients in achieving the goals stated in their individualized training plans (ITPs). This measure represents the percent of adult consumers served by Helen Keller National Center headquarters who successfully achieved identified training goals during the program year. The consumers and their instructors mutually develop these instructional objectives. To ensure that the measure is an accurate reflection of the Center's performance, the Department and HKNC have agreed that it should only include the outcomes for adult clients enrolled in the long-term formal program and the targeted skills training program. Clients in the short-term programs for high school students and senior citizens are not included in the

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Helen Keller National Center

calculation. In 2010, 92 percent of adult consumers achieved their training goals, which exceeded the target set for this measure and was an increase from the previous year.

The less restrictive settings measure refers to clients who move from settings such as living with parents or guardians, assisted living settings, and nursing homes to more independent living arrangements such as their own home or apartment or group homes. The percentage is taken only of those consumers with a specific goal to move to a less restrictive living situation. In fiscal year 2007, HKNC revised this measure to include participants in the independent living program whose goal is to maintain their ability to live independently in their current living situation. The Center believes that it is as important to help consumers who need assistance in maintaining their ability to live independently as those seeking to move to less restrictive settings. In 2010, 93 percent of clients moved into less restrictive settings, which exceeded the target set for this measure.

The percent placed in employment measure refers to outcomes for those individuals who came to the Center with a specific vocational objective. In fiscal year 2010, 21 of the 68 individuals who terminated training had a desire to achieve a vocational outcome. Of the 21 who had a vocational objective, 9 (43 percent) achieved this goal, which did not meet the target for this measure and is a slight decline from the percentage in the prior year. One individual is working in extended employment, which is work in a non-integrated or sheltered setting for a public or private nonprofit agency or organization that provides compensation in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act. Another 11 individuals are at home and seeking competitive or supported employment. Among the 47 individuals not seeking a vocational outcome, 14 were homemakers and 3 attended college. Four consumers did not complete the program and/or took a leave of absence. Three consumers received short term training, 12 were senior adults. In addition, 11 returned to high school.

Objective: *Increase the capacity of deaf-blind consumers to function more independently in the home community.*

Measure: Number of individuals (or families on behalf of individuals) referred to State or local agencies or service providers by HKNC's regional offices.

Measure: Percentage of consumers who participated in services or programs (other than HKNC) as a result of receiving a referral from HKNC's regional offices.

Objective: *HKNC will assist State vocational rehabilitation and employment programs in increasing employment outcomes for individuals who are deaf-blind.*

Measure: Number of referrals by HKNC's regional offices to vocational rehabilitation or related employment programs.

Measure: Percentage of individuals who achieved successful employment outcomes in which HKNC's regional offices played a collaborative role contributing training, advocacy and/or support to the consumer or job training agency.

These two proposed objectives and four proposed measures assess the performance of, and outcomes produced by, HKNC's field services and training programs. The regional offices and

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Helen Keller National Center

training programs need performance measures because these regional activities consume a significant percentage of the Center's resources. The Department and HKNC have provisionally agreed on the new objectives and measures listed above, pending the results of the comprehensive study of the center, pilot data collection, and an analysis of the data's accuracy.

Other Performance Information

In fiscal year 2009, the Department initiated an independent, comprehensive study of HKNC to evaluate the effectiveness of the Center. The study will examine not only alignment of the Center's programs with the needs of the various populations served by HKNC and its regional offices, but also the Center's interactions with vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies. In addition, it will examine the services that HKNC provides to other service providers and to the family members of deaf-blind individuals who, in turn, support those individuals.

The study plan includes the following research questions:

- Does HKNC meet its legislative mandates?
- Is the Center providing services that address the vocational and independent living needs of its clients?
- How do deaf-blind former HKNC participants perceive the adjustment training, independent living, and vocational services provided by the headquarters program and regional representatives, and to what extent do they think that the Center's services help deaf-blind individuals achieve their goals?
- How do deaf-blind former HKNC participants perceive the helpfulness of specific trainings and services provided by the Center?
- How does the Center allocate its resources? What costs are directly related to client services?
- What data and methodologies would be necessary to develop a measure of cost effectiveness?
- What are the characteristics of participants served by the Center?
- What services, training, or support does HKNC provide to families of individuals who are deaf-blind?
- How do VR agencies and service providers who have worked or will work with deaf-blind individuals perceive the usefulness of the services provided by HKNC?
- Do pre-service and in-service professionals perceive that the training provided by HKNC led to enhanced capacity by VR agencies or other service providers to serve individuals who are deaf-blind?
- Do State vocational rehabilitation agency staff, service providers, client group representatives, and other stakeholders perceive that the the vocational services and independent living services provided by the HKNC headquarters and regional programs led to successful employment outcomes?
- Do VR agencies believe HKNC is offering the right mix of services and that the services provided meet the needs of VR consumers and agencies?
- Are the current performance measures adequate for monitoring HKNC headquarters and regional services performance outcomes?

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Helen Keller National Center

- What alternative outcome measures could be developed for regional programs and HKNC headquarters that could improve the ability of the Department of Education to monitor HKNC operations?
- What changes can HKNC put in place to improve program operations and results?

The research team is collecting administrative data, surveying VR agencies, and interviewing individuals who are deaf blind and their families. As of early 2011, the contract is also analyzing the collected data and drafting a final report. The Department anticipates that the project will be completed by mid-2011.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Assistive technology

(Assistive Technology Act of 1998)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$30,960 ²	\$30,960	0

¹ The GEPA extension applies through September 30, 2011. The program is proposed for authorization in FY 2012 under appropriations language. Up to \$1,235 thousand may be used for National Activities, unless the amount available for AT State grants exceeds \$20,953,534, in which case up to \$1,900 thousand may be used for National Activities.

² Funding levels in FY 2011 represent the annualized continuing resolution levels of the 4th Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 111-322).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Assistive Technology (AT) Act is to provide States with financial assistance that supports programs designed to maximize the ability of individuals with disabilities of all ages and their family members, guardians, advocates, and authorized representatives to obtain AT devices and AT services. AT devices are defined as any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. A few examples of such devices are computer or technology aids, modified driving controls, and durable medical equipment such as wheelchairs or walkers. Grants support comprehensive statewide programs that are designed to increase the:

- availability of, funding for, access to, provision of, and training about AT devices and services;
- ability of individuals with disabilities of all ages to secure and maintain possession of AT during periods of transition, such as transition between school and home and home and work;
- capacity of public and private entities to provide and pay for AT devices and services;
- involvement of individuals with disabilities in decisions about AT devices and services;
- coordination of AT-related activities among State and local agencies and other private entities;
- awareness of and facilitate changes in law, regulations, procedures, policies, practices, and organizational structures, in order to improve access to AT; and

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Assistive technology

- awareness of the benefits of AT among targeted individuals and entities in the general population.

Assistive Technology (AT) State grant program

The AT State grant program is a population-based formula grant program to support comprehensive statewide programs that maximize the ability of individuals with disabilities of all ages to access and acquire AT. States must establish consumer-responsive advisory councils with a majority membership of individuals with disabilities who use AT to advise on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of these statewide programs.

Under the formula, States and outlying areas are initially allocated a base amount equal to the amount of funds they received under the AT program in FY 2004 (totaling \$20,288,534). Any funds appropriated in excess of the FY 2004 appropriation are initially distributed among the eligible entities with 50 percent of available funds distributed equally amongst them and 50 percent distributed according to the population of the State until each entity receives at least \$410,000. If any appropriated funds remain after each State receives this minimum, they are distributed with 20 percent divided equally amongst the States and 80 percent distributed according to their populations. To date, appropriated funds under this program have not been sufficient to necessitate this second round of distribution. The fiscal year 2010 State distributions were based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates released on December 22, 2008. The fiscal year 2011 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates released in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 State distributions are based on the April 1, 2010 Census data released on December 21, 2010.

Each State must set measurable goals, with timelines, that address the AT needs of individuals with disabilities related to: education (including goals related to the delivery of AT devices and services to students receiving services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)); employment (including goals related to the Rehabilitation Act's Vocational Rehabilitation State Grant program); telecommunications and information technology; and community living. The State must determine whether it has met its goals each year, and the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) has the authority to hold States accountable for a lack of progress toward these goals.

The State must implement each of the activities required under the program, which include State-level activities and State leadership activities. States must spend a minimum of 60 percent (unless the State elects to comply with the State flexibility provision in section 4(e)(6) of the AT Act, as described below) of their formula grant funds on four State-level activities: State financing programs, device reutilization programs, device loan programs, and device demonstrations. States may, however, direct their funds towards these activities in varying amounts if they use other State or non-Federal funds to support these activities at a comparable or greater level.

States may use up to 40 percent of their AT State grant program funding on State leadership activities, with at least 5 percent of that amount devoted to technical assistance and training related to transition for students exiting school or adults entering community living. The State leadership activities include the provision of technical assistance and training to targeted

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Assistive technology

individuals and entities focused on promoting the general awareness of the benefits of AT; skills development for persons involved in the assessment of the need for AT; the appropriate application of AT; and the integration of AT devices and services in plans required to be developed under other Federal laws, such as the IDEA's Individualized Education Program and the Rehabilitation Act's Individualized Plan for Employment. In addition, States must use a portion of their grant funds on public awareness activities, including the continuation and maintenance of a statewide system of information and referral, and coordination and collaboration activities amongst entities in the States that are responsible for the provision of AT.

The law provides States with flexibility to decide to carry out only two or three State-level activities, rather than all four. If a State elects to carry out two or three State-level activities, it must spend a minimum of 70 percent of its funds on those activities, while spending not more than 30 percent on the State leadership activities.

The AT Act specifies what a State must include in its annual progress report to RSA, including data on: the State's financing program, device loan program activities, device reutilization programs, and device demonstrations, including an analysis of those individuals who benefited from each of these programs; training activities; the statewide system of information and referral; and the outcomes of any improvement initiatives carried out by the State. The report must also provide data on the use of resources, including any contributed to the program by other public and private entities, and the level of customer satisfaction.

Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology

Formula grants for protection and advocacy (P&A) systems established under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act support protection and advocacy services to assist individuals with disabilities of all ages in the acquisition, utilization, or maintenance of AT services or devices. Funds are distributed on a State population basis, with a minimum annual grant of \$50,000. Outlying areas must receive not less than \$30,000 annually. Also, the Act requires a minimum award of \$30,000 to the P&A system serving the American Indian consortium. The fiscal year 2010 State distributions were based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates released on December 22, 2008. The fiscal year 2011 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates released in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 State distributions are based on the April 1, 2010 Census data released on December 21, 2010.

National Activities

The AT Act provides authority for the provision of technical assistance—through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements awarded on a competitive basis—to individuals with disabilities of all ages, to AT State grant program grantees, and to protection and advocacy systems. The AT Act requires the Secretary to make an award to renovate, update, and maintain a national public Internet site (<http://www.assistivetech.net>). In addition, the AT Act includes authority for grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to assist grantees in developing and implementing effective data collection and reporting systems.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Assistive technology

In designing its technical assistance activities, RSA must consider the input of directors of AT State grant programs and Alternative Financing programs, individuals with disabilities who use AT, family members, and protection and advocacy service providers, among others. The technical assistance must respond to specific requests for information and disseminate information to States, entities funded under the AT Act, and any other public entities that seek information about AT. The technical assistance must provide model approaches for the removal of barriers to accessing AT, examples of effective program coordination, and practices that increase funding for AT devices.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2007	\$30,452
2008	29,920
2009	30,960
2010	30,960
2011 CR	30,960

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$30.96 million in fiscal year 2012 for Assistive Technology (AT), the same as the fiscal year 2011 CR level for this program. This program includes the AT State grant program, the Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology program, and National activities. These programs enable individuals with disabilities to acquire technology they might not otherwise be able to obtain—technology that improves their quality of life, and in many cases, enables them to work or participate in other productive activities.

The Assistive Technology (AT) State grant program

The request includes \$25.66 million for the AT State grant program, the same as the 2011 CR level. These funds will be used by States to carry out the first year of a new 3-year State plan. State plans must describe how the State intends to carry out its AT State grant program to meet the AT needs of individuals with disabilities in the State, achieve the measurable goals required by the AT Act, and comply with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology

The fiscal year 2012 request includes \$4.3 million for the Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT) program, the same as the 2011 CR level. At this level, 29 States would receive \$50,000, the minimum amount allowed under the AT Act for the protection and advocacy systems established under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act to carry out this program. Outlying areas each would receive \$30,000. Funds would be used to assist individuals with disabilities of all ages in the acquisition, utilization, or maintenance of AT services or devices.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Assistive technology

National Activities

The fiscal year 2012 request also includes \$1 million for National Activities, the same as the 2011 CR level. In fiscal year 2012, funds would be used to continue support for grants that began in previous fiscal years. The Act requires support for a national information internet system, and authorizes State training, technical assistance, data collection, and reporting assistance.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>
AT State grant program	\$25,660	\$25,660	\$25,660
Protection and advocacy program	4,300	4,300	4,300
National activities	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>
Total	30,960	30,960	30,960

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2012 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Under the AT Act, each State is required to establish measurable goals for access to and acquisition of AT, with timelines for meeting those goals. These goals must address the AT needs of individuals with disabilities in the State in the domains of education, employment, community living, and telecommunications and information technology (IT).

Acquisition of AT: In order to measure the increase in the acquisition of AT, the following three measures have been established for the AT State grant program. The Department is requiring States to survey individuals served under this program to determine whether those who obtained AT (for **education, employment, or community living** purposes) believe they would not have otherwise obtained the AT device or service.

Goal: To increase access to and acquisition of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.

Objective: *To increase **acquisition** of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.*

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Assistive technology

Measure: The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who obtained assistive technology devices or services for **educational purposes** through State financing activities or reutilization programs, who would not have obtained the device or service.

Year	Target	Actual
2007		65
2008		68
2009		75
2010	75	
2011	69	
2012	69	

Measure: The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who obtained assistive technology devices or services for **employment purposes** through State financing activities or reutilization programs, who would not have obtained the device or service.

Year	Target	Actual
2007		65
2008		66
2009		61
2010	75	
2011	64	
2012	64	

Measure: The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who obtained assistive technology devices or services for **community living purposes** through State financing activities or reutilization programs, who would not have obtained the device or service.

Year	Target	Actual
2007		80
2008		89
2009		73
2010	90	
2011	81	
2012	81	

Additional information: Data reported for 2007 were incomplete. FY 2008 was the first year for which RSA had uniform data from all States, but the States were reporting on targets they established before they had baseline data. States used the 2008 data to set targets for 2009. The 2009 data show how States performed relative to these newly established targets. RSA used the performance data for 2008 to establish the national targets for fiscal year 2010. The target set for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 was established by taking the average of actual performance from fiscal years 2007 through 2009. During fiscal year 2011 RSA will work with States on new targets for these measures to be included in their new State plans for fiscal years

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Assistive technology

2012 – 2014. States will provide data for their performance against their previously established 2010 targets in May 2011.

Access to AT: In order to measure the increase in access to AT, the following four measures have been established under the AT State grant program. The Department is requiring States to collect information from individuals served under this program to determine whether access to device demonstration or loan programs has enabled them to make informed decisions about AT devices or services (for **education, employment, community living, and telecommunications** purposes).

Goal: To increase access to and acquisition of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.

Objective: *To increase **access** to assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.*

Measure: The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who have accessed assistive technology device demonstrations and/or device loan programs, and made a decision about the assistive technology device or services for **educational purposes** as a result of the assistance they received from the Assistive Technology Program.

Year	Target	Actual
2007		80
2008		84
2009		73
2010	90	
2011	79	
2012	79	

Measure: The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who have accessed assistive technology device demonstrations and/or device loan programs, and made a decision about the assistive technology device or services for **employment purposes** as a result of the assistance they received from the Assistive Technology Program.

Year	Target	Actual
2007		75
2008		80
2009		71
2010	85	
2011	75	
2102	75	

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Assistive technology

Measure: The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who have accessed assistive technology device demonstrations and/or device loan programs, and made a decision about the assistive technology device or services for community living purposes as a result of the assistance they received from the Assistive Technology Program.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007		80
2008		86
2009		71
2010	90	
2011	79	
2012	79	

Measure: The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who have accessed assistive technology device demonstrations and/or device loan programs, and made a decision about the assistive technology device or services for technology/telecommunications purposes as a result of the assistance they received from the Assistive Technology Program.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007		70
2008		70
2009		68
2010	80	
2011	69	
2012	69	

Additional information: Data reported for 2007 were incomplete. FY 2008 was the first year for which RSA had uniform data from all States, but the States were reporting on targets they established before they had baseline data. States used the 2008 data to set targets for 2009. The 2009 data show how States performed relative to these newly established targets. RSA used the performance data for 2008 to establish the national targets for fiscal year 2010. The target set for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 was established by taking the average of actual performance from fiscal years 2007 through 2009. During fiscal year 2011 RSA will work with States on new targets for these measures to be included in their new State plans for fiscal years 2012 – 2014. States will provide data for their performance against their previously established 2010 targets in May 2011.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Workforce innovation fund (Proposed Legislation)

FY 2012 Authorization (\$000s): 0 ¹

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2011 CR</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>Change</u>
0	\$30,000	+\$30,000

¹ The Administration proposes funding this program in FY 2012 through appropriations language.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Each year, millions of Americans receive employment services from Federal-, State-, or locally funded providers in the form of job training, labor market information, and income maintenance services. While the majority of these workers exit the programs with improved employment outcomes, the Administration wants to improve the performance of these providers and prompt States and localities to come forward with promising ideas for delivering better employment and education results for workers while also becoming more cost-effective. The proposed Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) will encourage innovation among States, localities, and providers and identify and validate effective evidence-based strategies for improving services to, and outcomes for, individuals eligible for services under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), the Rehabilitation Act, or the Wagner-Peyser Act.

Funds available under the WIF would be used to make competitive grants both to support innovative new strategies and to replicate and expand existing, effective, evidence-based strategies that will align programs and strengthen the workforce development system in a State or region so as to improve: the cost-effectiveness of the system; the services provided to employers under the system; and the education and employment outcomes for the system's clients. In addition, the Department will establish requirements to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, benefit substantially from activities supported under the WIF. Eligible applicants under this Fund would include States, State agencies eligible for assistance under any program authorized by the WIA, Rehabilitation Act, or Wagner-Peyser Act (such as State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies), and consortia of States, and partnerships, including regional partnerships, which may include State VR agencies, other providers of VR services, other workforce-related agencies, community-based organizations (such as centers for independent living), institutions of higher education, research organizations, and other public and private entities.

A portion of funds available under the WIF would also be available to support Pay for Success awards modeled on social impact bonds, which are being tested in the United Kingdom as an innovative way to attract private-sector investment for interventions that will achieve better outcomes and lower government costs. Using such an award, the Federal Government will be able to provide new intervention services to a target population, such as individuals with significant disabilities, and pay only for the results that are achieved. A Pay for Success

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Workforce innovation fund

agreement – developed in partnership with the Department of Education, the State, and an intermediary representing social investors – would obligate the Secretary of Education to pay for outcomes achieved by a non-governmental service provider based on specific terms and conditions, including performance metrics, set forth in the agreement. This pilot activity would be designed to achieve better outcomes for the target population by attracting private investment to finance new interventions to augment existing government services for the target population. The Pay for Success agreement would also commit the State to maintain pre-existing government services for the target population, so as not to disadvantage the recipients nor jeopardize the supplemental service provider's ability to achieve positive outcomes. If the improved outcomes are achieved as a complement to traditional government services, there would be a proven model that could be scaled up and replicated. If the outcomes are not achieved, Federal funds would not be disbursed under the Pay for Success agreement and any funds that had been obligated could be redirected to the Workforce Innovation Fund for other purposes.

While the Department is requesting authority to test the Pay for Success approach under the WIF, it will not set aside funds for this purpose unless it has determined that such a pilot could improve outcomes for the target population and social investors show interest.

In order to encourage applicants to propose innovative ideas and facilitate substantial changes in service delivery, the Administration requests authority to waive statutes and regulations relating to the WIA, the Rehabilitation Act, and the Wagner-Peyser Act. Waivers will be granted only when they are necessary for project implementation, and this additional flexibility would require guarantees of accountability and plans for rigorous evaluation.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research will work together with the Office of Vocational and Adult Education in the Department of Education and with the Department of Labor to identify priorities for the WIF's competitions and administer the Fund's activities. In order to enable the Department to align the competition schedule and evaluation activities for this program with the Office of Vocational and Adult Education's Workforce Innovation Fund and with external agencies, the Administration requests that the program's funding be available for 2 years.

FY 2012 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2012, the Administration requests \$30 million for the Workforce Innovation Fund, with up to a 5 percent set-aside for technical assistance and evaluation of projects. This program would be part of a larger Workforce Innovation Partnership that would develop innovative programs and identify effective strategies for improving the delivery of services and outcomes for beneficiaries under programs authorized by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the Rehabilitation Act, or the Wagner-Peyser Act. In addition to the \$30 million requested under the Rehabilitation Services account, the Department of Education's Adult Education State Grants program, the Department of Labor's WIA Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth programs, and Employment Service State Grants program would each devote 8 percent of their appropriations to the Fund.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Workforce innovation fund

This request provides an opportunity to work across program and agency lines, as well as to encourage partnerships among State, local, and private entities, to identify the most promising approaches for improving the delivery of services and achieving better outcomes for individuals with disabilities served under WIA, the Rehabilitation Act, or the Wagner-Peyser Act. The Department will collaborate with the Department of Labor to identify specific priorities for any competition.

Possible topics for grant priorities for the FY 2012 competition include:

- Achieving and retaining high-quality employment outcomes for populations with particularly high rates of unemployment, such as individuals with psychiatric disabilities, migrant workers with disabilities, and American Indians with disabilities.
- Preparing youth with significant disabilities for employment and independent living by providing opportunities for career exploration and work experience.
- Preparing individuals with significant disabilities for employment in high-demand occupations through leveraging strategic partnerships among State VR agencies, community colleges, employers, and other nontraditional partners.
- Engaging public, private, and nonprofit employers in creating full-time career opportunities with benefits for individuals with significant disabilities.
- Breaking down administrative barriers to better serving and coordinating services for individuals with disabilities who are co-enrolled in VR services and programs administered through One-Stop centers, particularly for those who may not be eligible for or able to receive services provided by State VR agencies.
- Deploying new applications of technology to improve consumers' access, program capacity, and the impact of employment and independent living services for individuals with disabilities.
- Ensuring meaningful programmatic and physical access to One-Stops, Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), and other relevant employment services for individuals with disabilities.

Promising practices identified and validated by the program's investments could be scaled up and disseminated, with the goal of significantly improving services to and employment and independent living outcomes for individuals with disabilities, including individuals with significant disabilities.

REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Workforce innovation fund

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2012</u>
Project funding:	
New project awards	\$28,200
Peer review of new award applications	300
Technical assistance and evaluation	<u>1,500</u>
Total	30,000
 Average award	 \$564
 Number of projects	 50

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance measures have not yet been developed for this program.